

East Germans  
in search  
of a home

Page 8

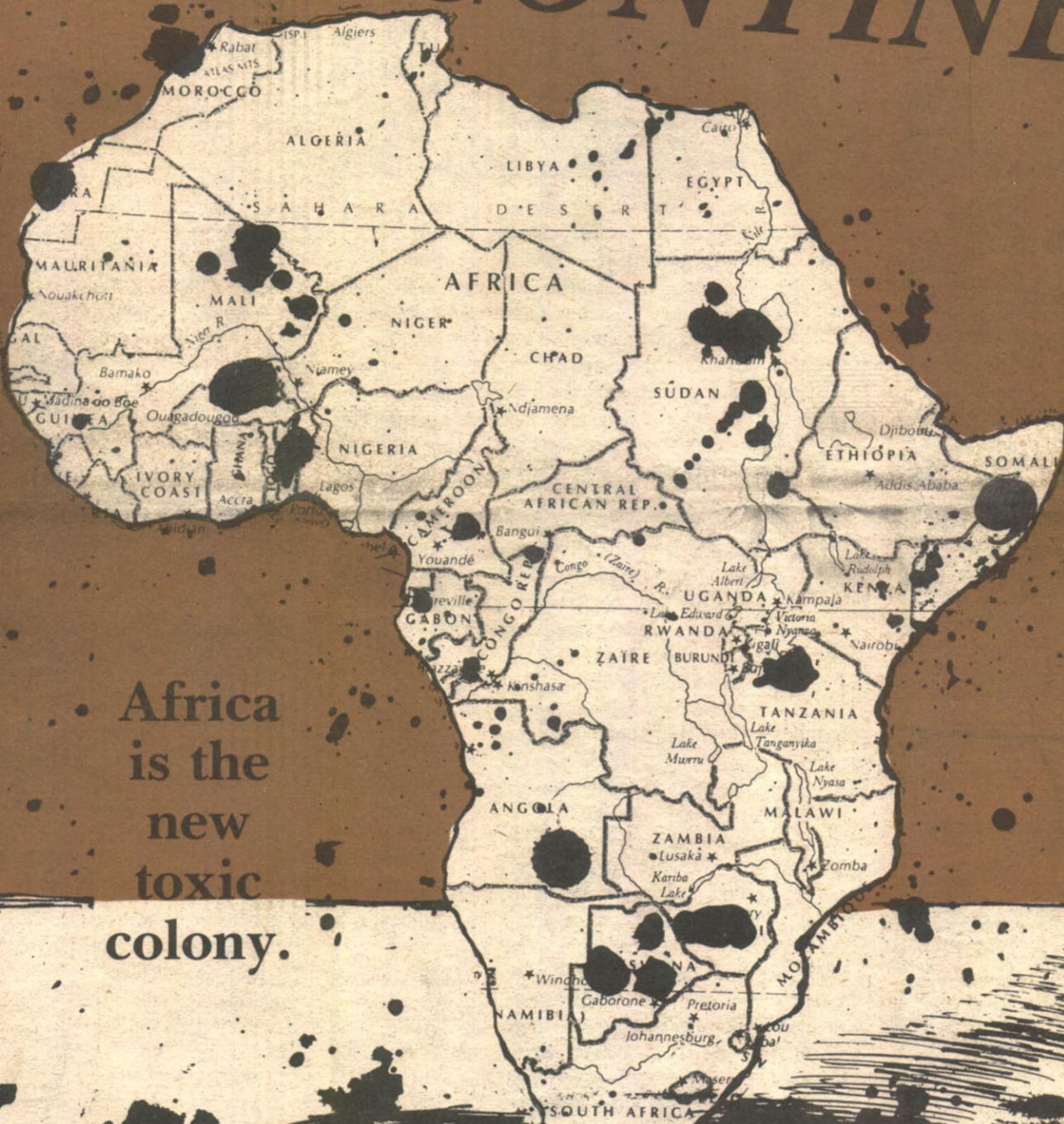
# IN THESE TIMES

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## The DUMP CONTINENT



Africa  
is the  
new  
toxic  
colony.

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Diana Johnstone reports, page 9



# Gangs harvest education's failures

TODAY'S LESSON

"THE GOLDEN RULE VS GETTIN' PAID"

note: HE WHO HAS THE GOLD  
MAKES THE RULES... SUCKERS!

Gen B  
PAW

By Salim Muwakkil

CHICAGO

Two black teenagers boldly walked into a high school here on October 11 and fatally stabbed 16-year-old Chester Dunbar in the back as he sat in geometry class. His classmates said he was targeted for death because he ridiculed a gang jacket worn by one of the alleged assassins. Police later charged a black 16-year-old with Dunbar's murder. The slaying was yet another of the thousands of black-on-black killings that occur with dismaying frequency in big cities across the country. But the schoolroom murder scene and the perpetrators' cold-blooded audacity rendered this crime particularly noteworthy. The incident also illuminated the struggle faced by young African-American males trying to negotiate the treacherous terrain of inner-city schools.

Dunbar's funeral attracted a host of politicians and community leaders who all predictably condemned the "heinous" crime and urged the students to say "no" to drugs and violence. However, underscoring the futility of those urgings, members of the same street gang reportedly responsible for targeting Dunbar were also on hand at the funeral. "They were so bold, they even came strapped with pistols," said one relative of the slain youth.

And, on top of that, an arsonist torched the Dunbar residence while the family was attending the funeral.

**Metal detectors:** Two weeks later a contingent of civic leaders, led by Jesse Jackson, assembled in the high school auditorium and encouraged the students to "keep hope alive," among other things. At follow-up meetings with city officials, Jackson urged that metal detectors be installed in various high schools to deter further violence. "If we can accept metal detectors in airports because they help make air travel safer, why can't we install them in schools to make urban education safer?" he asked.

Shawn Mitchell, a 16-year-old junior, was a friend of Dunbar's since elementary school, and their time in high school had forged even closer ties. "Chester and I were part of a group that stuck pretty close together trying to keep away from the gang-bangers and the clockers [drug dealers]," Mitchell explained shortly after Dunbar's well-attended funeral. "Chester wasn't afraid of the gang-bangers, and his courage was contagious. A lot of us stayed strong because of him." But Mitchell also noted that most of the boys who started high school with him and Dunbar had dropped out at the first opportunity. "Getting an education is not exactly the most popular thing to do in our neighborhood," he said. "All those guys who dropped out treat us like fools just because we stayed in school."

Such attitudes are not unusual in inner-city neighborhoods, where, according to the Boston-based National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS), drop-out rates hover near 50 percent. "Things that happen to our kids in school, especially black males, can degrade, dehumanize and socialize them into a condition of inferiority and a passive acceptance of a system they know is wrong," says NCAS program director Richard Gray. Such experiences demonstrate the system's lack of respect for them, Gray says, adding that the students reciprocate that attitude.

The list of academic ills affecting African-American males is long and getting longer. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF), a Washington-based group, found that black boys score lower than any other group on standardized tests; they are disproportionately misclassified as retarded and tracked more frequently into slow-learning classes; they are suspended, expelled and corporally punished more often and for lesser offenses than white male students; they are less likely to go to college than black girls, and when they do, they're more likely to drop out.

**Black male threat:** Many researchers trace this litany of woes to society's racist assumptions about black males. "Black men have problems even in the corporate world, where the physical attributes that show them to be vigorous persons—not sexually, just in terms of their muscularity—are threatening to white males," says J. Herman

Blake, former president of Tougaloo College, a historically black institution in Mississippi. "I believe that at a very early age, black male aggressiveness is discouraged by teachers, social workers and others, though they may not even be conscious of doing it. By the time they get to junior high, Blake adds, "the only places their aggressiveness can come out is on the sports field." Or in the field of crime.

Gray of the NCAS characterizes the reaction cited by Blake as the "fear factor" and says that it is deeply rooted in American history. Black men, he adds, have always been the most feared population in this country and so are treated with much greater scrutiny by all U.S. institutions. Social notions about African-Americans and their lifestyles form the basis for low expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies of academic underachievement. Many studies have irrefutably demonstrated a connection between teacher expectation and student performance. There's little disagreement that black as well as white teachers generally expect little from black male students.

But even more distressing is the possibility that the inner city's schools are ineffective by design. Does the manifest lack of a commitment to educate the growing masses of underclass youth simply reflect a deeper reality about this country's political economy? Ronald Edmonds, the late educational theorist whose work is only now receiving the recognition it has long deserved, summed up the situation this way nearly 10 years ago: "Whether or not we will ever effectively teach the children of the poor is probably far more a matter of politics than of social science, and that is as it should be."

**The peer problem:** Because of dysfunctional families and negative schooling experiences in inner-city neighborhoods, young African-Americans are particularly receptive to influences from their peers, with males especially

## INSIDE STORY

vulnerable. Street gangs serve as surrogate families for many young black males, and several researchers have correlated the increase in fragmented families to the upsurge in gang activity.

An examination of black youths' social behavior by Louis Castenell of New Orleans' Xavier University found that sources of self-esteem differ between low-income black boys and white boys. Lacking the social and familial affirmation considered essential to the development of healthy self-esteem, black boys depend far more on peer acceptance than do students from other groups. And since so many of their peers reject the values of a society that rejects them, black boys are perversely rewarded for academic failure and other kinds of behavior considered negative by mainstream society.

Poverty is another link in this chain. The lack of material goods adds considerable insult to the long list of injuries already suffered by poor black youth. Consequently, the urge to participate in the relatively thriving underground economy is an option too attractive to ignore; success in that undertaking—"gettin' paid"—demands ruthlessness and a readiness to be brutally violent. For many young African-American males in this country's ghettos, "gettin' paid" is their all-consuming preoccupation and lone measure of respect. This kind of behavior is not limited to those actually involved in the underground economy; it's safer for everyone to be perceived as victimizer rather than victim in these economically ravaged neighborhoods.

Chester Dunbar's murder outraged Chicago's citizens and attracted a star-studded cast to Harper High School to condemn the brutal act. But Dunbar's alleged assailant is now a folk hero of sorts in the neighborhood surrounding the school, and the gang to which he belonged has risen a notch in esteem. Metal detectors may help keep the weapons out of Chicago's inner-city schools, but it will take considerably more than that to bring education in.

## CONTENTS

Inside Story: Gangs and education in the inner city .....	2
Ortega's motives in "calling off" the cease-fire .....	3
In Short .....	4
Pollution in the not-so-Great Lakes .....	6
Globalization ideology and U.S. business .....	7
Refugees hit from both sides of the Berlin Wall .....	8
Toxics in Africa—wasting a continent .....	9
A dispatch from the FENASTRAS bombing in El Salvador .....	11
No free lunch: U.S. aid to the Philippines .....	11
No news is bad news in contraceptive market .....	12
Editorial .....	14
Letters/Sylvia .....	15
Viewpoint: China's troubles caused by longtime policy .....	16
Ashes and Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn .....	17
In Print: Bernard Shaw's turn at the turn of the century .....	18
Science fiction—a fan's notes .....	18
Catharine MacKinnon's feminist state .....	19
In the Arts: Ads Whittle away at young minds .....	20
Wynton Marsalis shines on seasonal schlock .....	21
Classifieds/Life in Hell .....	23
Postage modernism .....	24

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By William Gasperini

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

**L**AST WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE Sandinista government was lifting a 19-month-old cease-fire with the contras may have initially conveyed the impression that only the Sandinistas sought a return to large-scale war in Nicaragua. Since the cease-fire was declared in March 1988, military activity had until recently slowed to the point where much of the world believed the war was over.

Yet while contra attacks have fallen dramatically since last year, the war has never really ended. Uncertainty still reigns in the Nicaraguan countryside and, most importantly, in the country's psyche.

Although international policy- and opinion-makers have condemned Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega for lifting the cease-fire, one must look beyond the official pronouncements to understand why he did it.

While the February 1988 cutoff of U.S. military aid forced most of the contras to retreat to their Honduran base camps, rebel policy has always been to maintain a presence inside Nicaragua. Small units rotate through northern war zones to keep up morale and dispel a sense of inertia within the ranks.

As internal political changes occurred within Nicaragua under the regional peace process that began in August 1987—especially the announcement of elections scheduled for next February 25—the contras increasingly appeared to be a holdover from the heady days of the "Reagan Revolution." The focus in Nicaragua shifted from the military to the political arena, and it seemed things might even "normalize."

**For whom the war tolls:** Although the contras were debilitated when the U.S. withdrew its military aid, they were far from out. If unable to mount large-scale operations, they could still ambush vehicles, set land mines, and attack isolated farm cooperatives, long considered military targets because they had been organized by the state and defended by local militias. The government said that over the last 19 months 736 people have died and 1,180 have been wounded.

Given this toll, Ortega has repeatedly stressed that the war has sputtered along since peace talks broke off in June 1988. At the time, the Sandinistas said they would continue to honor the cease-fire agreed to by both sides in March of last year. The contras, however, officially refused to accept the truce after June 1988, although they claimed they would not initiate offensive actions.

In the summer of 1988 contra units began to operate more or less independently far from their Honduran sanctuaries, especially in central Chontales province and in Nueva Guinea in the south. It may have been just such a unit that ambushed two truckloads of reserve soldiers the night of October 21 near Rio Blanco, 180 miles northeast of Managua. Seventeen young men died and nine were wounded in the worst such attack since the cease-fire began. Contra leaders neither confirmed nor denied the October 21 ambush but did admit it may have been staged by a renegade unit.

The bloody ambush was the straw that broke the camel's back. An angry Daniel Ortega convened an emergency meeting of top advisers to consider a response. Since the reservists had been on their way to register to vote in February's elections, he said,



Shifting gears once again, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said last week, "David must stand up to the Yankee Goliath."

## Nicaraguan contra war never really stopped

the contras were deliberately targeting the electoral process. And he made it clear who he thought was really responsible.

"The U.S. government has to decide once and for all if it supports the Nicaraguan electoral process or not," he told reporters. "And it has to decide if it will abide by the decision of the Central American presidents to demobilize the contras by December." Under the peace agreement signed in August, the contras are supposed to disarm and leave their Honduran base camps by December 5.

Contra leaders believe that Sandinista soldiers should not be allowed to vote in the February 25 elections. They also accuse the soldiers of registering more than once and intimidating civilians in remote areas. The Sandinistas, however, believe it is the contras who are intimidating the civilians: contra threats have forced certain voter registration centers to close as the contras unofficially "campaign" for the United National Opposition coalition (UND) led by candidate Violeta Chamorro.

**Contra offensive:** The polarization in Nicaragua, perhaps inevitably, has reached a level where a relatively smooth political process is impossible. Until the bloody October 21 ambush, voter registration—held on four Sundays in October—was completed with little incident. But the government claims the number of attacks has increased substantially, whether or not they are sanctioned by the rebel high command. The Defense Ministry reports that more than 30 contras and 21 soldiers have been killed—including those in the October 21 ambush—in recent weeks. Attacks on farm cooperatives have also increased, including one on October 30 in southern Nicaragua that left four campesinos dead and five wounded. The day before suspending the cease-fire Ortega,

along with several TV crews, visited the farm for the funerals.

The increase in attacks may be due to higher numbers of contras entering Nicaragua from Honduras, fearing they may be forcibly disarmed under the peace plan. Or the rebels may be intentionally provoking Managua, hoping to spark an interest in new military aid in Washington. The internal opposition, meanwhile, believes Ortega is fanning the flames of crisis, seeking an excuse to cancel or postpone the elections.

Whatever the motivation, Ortega said last week that the Sandinistas couldn't "stand with arms crossed" any longer. In a tone absent since the Reagan era, he lashed out at George Bush for "spreading terror and

### Nicaraguan polarization has reached the level where a relatively smooth political process is impossible.

death" in Nicaragua, saying, "Once again, David must stand up to the Yankee Goliath."

Although citing the contra attacks as the reason for lifting the cease-fire, Ortega's primary goal is to force the contra demobilization issue into the international spotlight. Despite the regional peace plan, the rebels appear to have little intention of going anywhere; in a Honduran border camp top Commander Enrique Bermudez told reporters recently, "We're not going to leave until we're sure democracy has come to Nicaragua."

The rebels can stay put thanks largely to the \$4.5 million in humanitarian assistance they receive from Washington each month.

While the aid is subject to renewal this month, it officially lasts through February. In light of Ortega's action, President Bush hinted that he may ask for new military aid, but few observers believe the U.S. Congress would support such a request.

Ortega wants to force the U.S. to rechannel existing aid to help pay for demobilization, as a clause in the law allows. And he says the Sandinistas will reinstate the cease-fire if there are signs from Washington of a shift in policy.

But currently that appears unlikely. Anti-Ortega sentiments have grown rapidly in Washington, primarily due to the Sandinista leader's less-than-diplomatic behavior at the summit of presidents from around the Americas held in Costa Rica October 27-28.

**Back to the future:** Ortega had a brief encounter with President Bush at the meeting, telling the U.S. leader, "People are still dying in Nicaragua, and you are in a position to do something about it." Bush responded, "The people of Nicaragua will decide what they want for their own future."

Rather than discuss his decision to suspend the cease-fire at a meeting with the other 15 presidents, Ortega leaked word of his decision to several American reporters—and later confirmed it at a rally of sympathetic law school students in San Jose. He then went to the state dinner still dressed in olive-green fatigues and a red and black Sandinista kerchief, looking, in the words of several observers, like a "wayward Boy Scout." Ortega's behavior may have played well among his ardent supporters back home, but it damaged Managua's standing with other regional governments.

Ortega told one interviewer last week that the announcement was intended to "shock" other Latin American leaders—and possibly the U.S. Congress—into complying with the peace plan. He indeed shocked the world, but whether it is the kind of attention Nicaragua needs is an open question, as the country's long saga takes yet another uncertain turn.

William Gasperini is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.



# IN SHORT

By Katharine Greider

## Snapshots

Last spring American Indian activist Vernon Bellecourt flipped off two rolls of snapshots at a one-hour photo shop in Minneapolis. Little did he know that the FBI would soon be poring through the pictures taken at family and social gatherings—and at the First Congress of Indian Organizations in Panama City, Panama. An FBI agent simply flashed a badge (he had no warrant), and the store clerk handed over the negatives. On June 6 Bellecourt sued the FBI for violating his right to free speech and privacy. Because the FBI had no warrant for the seizure, Chief U.S. District Court Judge Donald Alsop ordered that the photos be sealed in an FBI vault pending the suit's outcome. But the judge dismissed the case two months later when the photo-store manager informed him that the public could view pictures being developed through a glass window at the shop. Given this information, the judge said, Bellecourt could not reasonably expect that his film would remain private. The FBI would not say why Bellecourt was under investigation, but his lawyer believes that the agency is concerned about his client's 1987 trip to Libya. He told the *The Minneapolis Star Tribune* that the FBI suspects that Bellecourt and his American Indian Movement plan to carry out terrorist attacks in the U.S. in the name of Libyan leader Muammar Khadafy. Bellecourt told the *Star Tribune*, "It's all totally ridiculous. America has always had a fear of the unknown, and out of that fear comes intolerance, overreaction and paranoia. If it weren't so serious it would almost be a laughable matter." Bellecourt's mirth is considerably dampened by his fear that circulation of the pix might leave Central American participants at the congress in Panama City vulnerable to death squads. He says he will appeal the judge's decision.

## Eye spy

Here's some bad news for shoppers who like to indulge in the fun and frolic of petty theft. *Insight* magazine reports that retailers now have access to a security device that could snag more shoplifters than cameras, two-way mirrors or entrance alarms. Ann Droid is a mannequin with a difference: she sees and she hears. A camera lens peers through Ann's eyes, ensuring that shoppers and employees will rue the day they stuffed some unpaid-for item into their bags. A microphone nestles in the mannequin's nose, recording the conversation of any who mill about her. Jerry Gutierrez, the mannequin repairman who invented Ann, told *Insight* that the microphone could be used as a marketing tool—retailers could listen in on customer chitchat about what's hot and what's not.

## Taking the heat

One of the first experts to identify global warming as a likely outcome of the greenhouse effect is now advising us to accept that higher temperatures are here to stay, according to writer Walter Anderson. Walter Orr Roberts, professor of astrophysical, planetary and atmospheric sciences at the University of Colorado, believes "humans should do what they have always done in the face of adversity—learn to adapt," writes Anderson. Roberts urges nations to study ways for a hotter Earth to supply food to a growing world population—through genetic engineering of plant species that can survive higher temperatures, use of seawater for irrigation and improved freshwater irrigation systems. Roberts says nations should also strive to produce more fuel-efficient cars and homes and to recycle paper, glass and organic material in order to contain the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

## Cocaine chemicals

The Chemical Diversion and Trafficking Act of 1988 aims to stop diversion of chemicals for use in the production of illegal drugs, especially cocaine, by monitoring transactions involving any of 20 common industrial chemicals. But a spokesperson for the Colombian Society of Chemical Engineers earlier this year told *Chemicalweek* magazine that the legislation stifles access to chemicals of legitimate industry in South America, creating a booming black market in the chemicals. The restrictions on imports and domestic red tape make it impossible for South American chemists to keep up with demand. As a result, black-market prices for ether and acetone have skyrocketed to as much as eight times their legal price. Cocaine processors, "ready to pay any price," reportedly control the market. Alfonso Barragan, pres-



## The rich get richer

Foreign-aid bills passed by the U.S. House and Senate for the 1990 budget year demonstrate legislators' inability to weigh poverty more heavily than security in deciding which countries receive U.S. assistance.

As usual, Israel, which has the highest per capita GNP of any country receiving U.S. aid, is slated to receive \$3 billion next year, more than any other country. Together, Israel and Egypt—which will get more than \$2.1 billion in aid—soak up more than a third of the \$14.4 billion in total foreign assistance allocated by the Senate.

The strong U.S. financial support for Israel can be attributed to both the strength of that country's supporters in Congress and the perception of Israel as an ally in a sea of Arab foes. Egypt's large share dates back to the Camp David agreement, which removed Egypt from the Arab-Israeli conflict.

El Salvador is set to receive between \$85 million and \$90 million in military assistance, in addition to \$247.8 million in economic and development aid that the White House had requested but on which Congress took no action. Supporters of the aid argued that Salvador's new president, Alfredo Cristiani, must be supported in his first talks with leftist rebels. The administration may slate

additional non-earmarked funds for El Salvador.

Although only the Senate earmarked funds for Turkey and Greece—\$500 million and \$350 million in military assistance respectively—those large grants are likely to sail through a House-Senate conference committee untouched because of both countries' importance to NATO.

Pakistan also receives hefty U.S. assistance, primarily because it borders Afghanistan, where rebels are fighting the Soviet government in Kabul. Islamabad has allowed the rebels and more than 2 million Afghan refugees to move freely within its borders, earning \$250 million in the Senate version of the foreign-aid bill. This amount could rise and equal the \$576 million given last year if the administration slots non-earmarked funds for Islamabad.

The foreign-aid bills are now in a conference committee where members will hammer out differences between the two measures before sending them back to the House and Senate floors for final approval.

Anti-poverty lobbyists take a dim view of current U.S. foreign-aid policy. "If I were you, I'd write about how foreign aid has not been ... helping poor people," says Leanne Skooglund Hofford, a lobbyist for the Washington-based Inter-Faith Action for Economic Justice. "I wouldn't even say it's serving long-

term U.S. interests."

While most of the countries receiving large amounts of U.S. aid could be called wealthy, Congress has awarded extremely small amounts of aid to some of the world's poorest countries. The Senate bill would give \$16 million to Chad, whose per capita GNP is estimated at \$150 annually, while it spends \$2 million in Guinea-Bissau, which has an estimated per capita GNP of \$170. In contrast, Israel's 1987 per capita GNP stood at \$6,800. Bread for the World estimated that in 1988 the world's 39 poorest countries received 13.8 percent of U.S. aid, compared to 22.3 percent for Israel and 16.3 percent for Egypt.

Over the past few years, foreign aid has become more valuable to the countries receiving it as outright grants have replaced loans. But an amendment to the house foreign-aid package may lessen the value of U.S. assistance. Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) sponsored a measure that would require cash assistance to be spent on U.S. goods, at least half of which must be shipped on much more costly U.S.-flagged carriers.

As Torricelli told the *Boston Globe*: "Foreign assistance should be goods provided by Americans, arriving on American ships flying American flags, so we can be seen giving assistance to grateful people."

—Diane Bartz

## Argentina fails to balance scales

BUENOS AIRES—Argentina's newly elected president, Carlos Saúl Menem, signed a series of executive decrees in early October granting pardons to 210 military and police officials. Some had been charged with massive human-rights violations committed during the so-

called "dirty war," and others with leading three rebellions against the civilian government of former President Raul Alfonsín. All polls show that the vast majority of Argentines have been and continue to be against any pardons. The sins have not been forgiven by the people.

But Argentina would not be Argentina without a little touch of the bizarre. A close look at the additional

67 pardons given to non-uniformed officials (i.e., civilian "subversives") shows that 13 of the pardons were awarded posthumously; the written text, however, failed to mention this seemingly pertinent fact. Another three were kidnappers/extortionists without political connections. Four other "civilians" were actually members of the Uruguayan military wanted for torture and murder on Argen-



tine soil.

The Menem government went to great lengths to demonstrate the balanced scales of Argentine justice, adapting the rhetoric of the collective military unconscious: "This was a war fought against subversion, and in a war ..." Menem has doubly damned some of the families of the 13 dead by pardoning—in the same decree—the military officers directly accused in the murder and torture of seven of them.

Thousands of other deaths await recognition. The 15,000 to 30,000 *desaparecidos* from the "dirty war" are just that—disappeared, not dead. The military government told that to thousands of families who searched for their missing relatives. And the democratic governments of the past six years—even with all the court testimony and documentation—still have not been able to resolve the semantics. The insurance companies, banks, pension funds and social security and other institutions refuse in many cases to compensate families who lack a death certificate.

Testimony in the courtroom and before the government human-rights commission details the military's macabre behavior. Some bodies were cut into pieces and thrown from air force planes into the

South Atlantic. Concentration camps were set up. Many of the military worshipped Hitler. Children were forced to watch their parents being tortured and vice versa. Children born in the camps were sold after their mothers were killed.

The day after announcing the pardons, Menem invited one of those pardoned, Col. Mohammed Ali Seineldin, to dine with him at the presidential residence. Although born into a family of Lebanese immigrants, Seineldin is a devout Catholic and ultranationalistic Argentine. Seineldin believes he fights with a cross and a sword against those who are anti-nationalist, anti-Catholic, anti-armed forces, anti-Christ, pro-Marxist, etc. He is considered a hero of the 1982 Falkland Islands war, although it remains unclear what Seineldin or any other Argentine accomplished to earn the title of hero.

Seineldin reappeared on the Argentine scene in late 1988, after spending two years training his pal Manuel Noriega's Panamanian defense forces in counterinsurgency techniques. He immediately led an insurrection against the Alfonsín government, demanding total vindication for those who fought against "communist subversion." In the past few years, Seineldin has become the

leader of the self-proclaimed Khadafyist sector of the military.

President Menem's dinner engagement with Seineldin provoked consternation even in many of those who supported the pardons. The nation was further divided.

A few pardons were granted to the other side. Some of the leadership of the Montoneros, the Peronista guerrillas of the '70s, were freed of all charges. The trouble with this balancing of accounts is the distinct impression it gives that many of the freed Montoneros apparently acted in concert with the military and now are open and avid supporters of Rico and Seineldin. Certainly, for those civilians who had to live through the delinquent terrorism of its Montoneros and the state terrorism of the armed forces, it is another case of the civilian population being doubly damned. But remember the historical context. This is a people whose own air force dive-bombed a demonstration against the 1955 military uprising, to cite just one example from a long and dolorous history.

Argentina under Menem has pushed another epoch quickly into the realm of the subconscious. And the population tries to forget even as it tries to learn how to remember.

—Joe Goldman

## A tough act lies fallow

OAKLAND, CALIF.—The Nuclear Free Zone Act "interferes with ... national defense, nuclear weapons disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy," charges a suit brought by the U.S. government against this California city on September 6. If the suit, the first of its type initiated by the federal government, succeeds later this year in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco, then all 150 or so other local laws across the country that regulate the use and shipment of nuclear materials become vulnerable.

That possibility doesn't worry the authors of Oakland's law who, campaigning in other cities now, maintain that the nuclear free zone (NFZ) movement will not be deterred if Oakland's law, passed by the voters in the 1988 general election, is declared unconstitutional. "The same people who vote for the [NFZ] law will elect people to Congress," Steve Bloom, the law's co-author and a leader of the NFZ movement, told the *Oakland Tribune*. But the Oakland attorneys defending the law are less optimistic: City Attorney Jayne Williams says, "I suspect the strategy is that if they can defeat Oakland's ordinance, they can defeat everybody else's."

According to the suit, *United States vs. City of Oakland*, Oakland is a nuclear nexus. To the west, halfway across the San Francisco Bay, is Treasure Island, and to the north the Mare Island shipyards—two Navy facilities that maintain nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed ships. To Oakland's east lies the Concord Naval Weapons Stations, which ship

explosives containing "low-level radioactive materials." To the city's south lies Lawrence Livermore Lab, "one of the nation's two nuclear weapons design laboratories." Though the suit doesn't mention it, Lawrence Livermore is on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund cleanup list. Adjacent to Oakland is the Alameda Naval Air Station, "homeport to five nuclear-powered ships" including the U.S.S. *Enterprise*, which last week sent her eight aging reactors in for repairs.

Finally, within Oakland's jurisdiction is a branch office of the Department of Energy (DOE) that has oversight of "research laboratories and industrial contractors located throughout California and 33 other states."

On May 25 this office received notice, as required by Oakland's act, that its 300-plus employees have a little less than two years to move their weapons work elsewhere or to find more peaceful work here.

In its suit, the U.S. government charges that the act's prohibition on nuclear-weapons work in Oak-

land, such as that done in the downtown DOE office, "has interfered with the federal government's exclusive authority of national defense." Further, the Oakland act asks for 45 days advance warning to prepare for any transporting of nuclear materials. According to the U.S. government, these requirements "severely diminish the Navy and Energy Department's ability to fulfill their national-defense purposes." This advance notice of nuclear shipments allows the city to hold public hearings, select the safest route and equipment, notify the neighborhoods along the route and warn motorists with big signs saying, "Transportation of Hazardous Radioactive Materials." But the government asserts that this advanced warning is not "justified by any compelling municipal interest." One wonders if recent DOE disasters, like those at Colorado's Rocky Flats weapons plant or at the Savannah River Plant in South Carolina, justify "any compelling municipal interest."

The Nuclear Free Zone Act and its current trouble is getting little attention in Oakland. The case isn't much discussed. Without a recent and nearby nuclear disaster, nukes aren't news. Many citizens don't even know that the city has passed such a law. (The librarian from whom I tried to obtain a copy of the act was unaware of its existence.)

Since the suit was filed, several of the custom-made signs declaring Oakland to be an NFZ have been stolen. It is doubtful that they will be replaced in the near future. The city's motion to dismiss the U.S. suit was rejected in late October.

—Jon Bouknight



ident of the engineers' society, notes that as a result of hampered access to sulfuric acid—a chemical crucial to the country's move toward industrialization—"the entire industrial process in Colombia is suffering." The U.S., however, is the major supplier of chemicals for cocaine production, according to a 1988 CIA report. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration estimates that 15 to 20 percent of solvents exported from the U.S. to Latin America are diverted to the coca industry. Interestingly, many American chemical-industry organizations helped shape the 1988 legislation.



## The face of racism

Among the ghost, goblin and monster masks children chose from this Halloween was the "arab shiek" mask, a grizzly-looking rendition of a familiar stereotype. Spencer Gifts, the novelty-store chain that sold the masks, marketed it with scary characters such as Freddy Krueger from *A Nightmare on Elm St.* and Jason from *Friday the 13th*. According to Faris Bouhafa of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Spencer "never seemed to understand" the group's objection to the mask. The chain refused to stop selling it until the ADC mounted a national grass-roots campaign. After the masks had been pulled off the shelves for two weeks, Spencer asked the ADC to pay for half of their \$34,000 cost. The ADC considered this an absurd request and refused. So Spencer tried to recoup its losses by resuming sale of the masks—at half price—during the peak days before Halloween. This move prompted protests in several cities the weekend before Halloween.

## Harvest fest

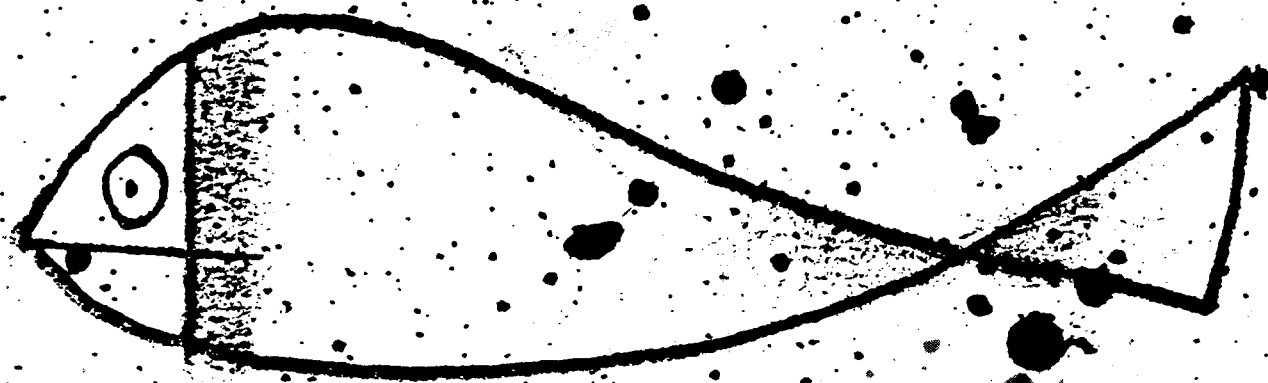
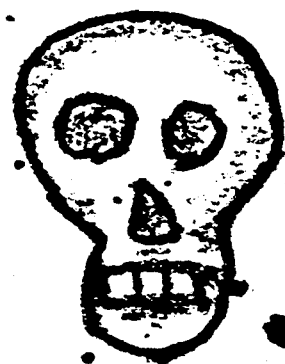
On September 30, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) kicked off a month of Midwest rallies with a "harvest fest" in Madison, Wis. The rally for pot legalization drew a crowd of about 30,000, according to NORML National Director Don Fiedler. "That was a real thrill," he says. The fest was followed by smaller rallies in 10 other Midwest cities. Speakers at the rallies addressed the legalization issue, and rally organizers passed out literature and showed a film titled *Hemp for Victory*, which was released during World War II by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. But the press didn't demonstrate much interest in the Midwest NORML tour. "It's very hard for a legalization rally to get coverage outside of a local paper," says Doug McVay, national NORML projects coordinator.

## Beverly Hills—police station, that is

At her sentencing hearing in mid-October, the judge told former Beverly hillbilly Zsa Zsa Gabor, who had been convicted of assaulting a police officer, to stop making public scenes and "act like the lady that you so repeatedly say you are." A Los Angeles TV station had some fun at Gabor's expense. The station accompanied footage of her trial with the following lyrics put to the tune of the theme song of the old sitcom *The Beverly Hillbillies*.

"Gonna tell you a little story 'bout an actress named Gabor. Hadn't worked in movies for 20 years or more. Then one day, she was driving her Rolls-Royce. She heard 'Pull over' from a thundering voice. A cop, that is—blue and gold—Beverly Hills. Well, the first thing you know, she slapped him in the face. Called him nasty names, and put him in his place. He said, 'County jail, that's the place you ought to be.' So he put her in the car, and they drove to Beverly. Police station, that is—loaded guns—Gucci shoes."





c 1989 Peter Haman

By David Beach

**T**OURISM AND FISHING-INDUSTRY BOOSTERS like to say that pollution-control efforts have brought the Great Lakes, the world's largest supply of fresh water, back to life in the last 20 years. But many scientists and environmental activists are more concerned than ever about the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem and the 40 million U.S. and Canadian citizens living in the lakes' basin.

According to a recent report by the Conservation Foundation in the U.S. and the Institute for Research on Public Policy in Canada, "neither country is spending enough or doing enough to check the insidious long-term decline of the Great Lakes ecosystem.... It is painfully clear that only the easiest problems have been tackled and the cheapest remedies, such as curbing the dumping of sewage and toxic chemicals straight into the system, applied. Most of the more difficult challenges lie ahead—such tasks as controlling airborne toxic substances, protecting and restoring groundwater quality, dealing with the problems of toxic metals and pervasive, persistent organic chemicals."

To demand swifter action to stop toxic dumping, more than 150 activists from around the lakes attended the International Joint Commission (IJC) biennial meeting on Great Lakes water quality, held in Hamilton, Ontario, in mid-October. The IJC, a binational body set up as a result of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between the U.S. and Canada, advises the governments on issues affecting the lakes. One of its most important functions is to monitor the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the governments' pledge "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem."

Environmentalists praise the agreement's ecosystem approach, which recognizes that pollution does not stop at political boundaries, and its goal to virtually eliminate persistent toxic substances from the Great Lakes basin. They criticize the federal governments, however, for lack of progress since the agreement was signed in 1978.

6 IN THESE TIMES NOVEMBER 8-14, 1989

## Great Lakes prognosis critical but guarded

In the past, citizens had little opportunity to air their concerns at IJC meetings. But this year the commission bowed to public pressure and allowed 10 hours of public testimony, much of it organized by a coalition of environmental groups led by Greenpeace and Great Lakes United.

**Then and now:** At an IJC luncheon Joyce McLean, international Great Lakes coordinator for Greenpeace, said, "In 1918 the IJC's first pollution investigation of the Great

Lakes [said that] many parts of the basin were 'gross' and 'foul' and 'the situation along the frontier is generally chaotic, everywhere perilous and in some cases disgraceful.'" The 1918 report said industrial discharges were a major cause of the pollution and recommended prohibition of such discharges. "The philosophy and action recommended at that time were simple," McLean added. "Stop the pollutants from entering the water, even if you think the water can handle them. The same philosophy must apply today."

### ENVIRONMENT

But the federal governments have never given the IJC power to enforce its many water-quality recommendations. In effect, its role has been to show how damaged the ecosystem is without being able to do anything about it.

Noting that neither U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator William Reilly nor his Canadian counterpart, Lucien Bouchard, had chosen to attend the IJC meeting, McLean said, "Citizens are clearly well ahead of government on environmental issues. They want action."

While recognizing the IJC's lack of legal authority, the citizens in attendance wanted

it to use its considerable prestige and expertise to press the federal governments, states and provinces to live up to the Water Quality Agreement. They also wanted zero discharge, a complete elimination of persistent toxic substances as opposed to current practices of dilution and risk management, and backed specific reduction timetables for all industries generating toxic waste, as well as uniform water-quality standards among the various states and provinces.

"There are no technical barriers [to achieving zero discharge]," said Paul Muldoon of the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy. "People are ready for it.... They want zero discharge within 10 years and are willing to pay for it."

**Increased effectiveness:** Citizens also called for the following changes to make the IJC more effective:

- Creation of a citizens advisory board to ensure formal representation in IJC decision-making. In response, the commission promised a series of round-table discussions that would include industry representatives as well as citizens.

- Appointment of commissioners based on their environmental experience and com-

### Citizens are concerned about toxic pollution in the world's largest supply of fresh water.

mitment, instead of on their political connections. Of the IJC's six commissioners, three are appointed by the U.S. president and three by the Canadian prime minister.

- An end to conflicts of interest on IJC advisory boards. Presently, the same EPA and Environment Canada bureaucrats who

run government water-quality programs also oversee those programs for the IJC.

- Greater funding for the IJC so it can monitor water quality independently from government agencies. A lack of resources, for example, handicaps the commission's major strategy—Remedial Action Plans, or RAPs—for cleaning up the worst toxic hot spots around the lakes. The IJC has targeted 42 heavily polluted "areas of concern" around the basin for special cleanup efforts. In each area, a local RAP committee of community representatives is supposed to identify environmental problems and plan for the restoration of "beneficial uses," such as clean-water supplies, recreation and aquatic life.

Funding of the RAPs is up to the states, provinces and local governments. In the case of Cleveland's Cuyahoga River RAP, for example, this means that the complex plan is being written by volunteers who must beg donations to pay for office supplies. The group sought new money in the Ohio EPA budget for water-quality studies and fish-tissue sampling so it could determine what remedial actions were necessary and possible. Although the Ohio legislature earmarked the small amount of \$100,000 a year for two years, that money was taken from other vital water-quality monitoring programs. No one knows where the many millions of dollars will come from to implement the plan once it is finally written.

A primary concern of the citizens is the long-term human health effects of exposure to the toxic chemicals still accumulating in the lakes' food chain. Researchers are just starting to investigate the subtle developmental, neurological and behavioral effects on humans that have already been documented in wildlife.

But even though all the scientific evidence is not yet in, Great Lakes environmentalists are determined to build the public pressure that will force the IJC and the governments to find the political will and the resources to clean up the Great Lakes. □

David Beach is a freelance journalist based in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.



By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

**T**HE NEW BUZZWORD IN BUSINESS CIRCLES IS "globalization." *Business Week* headlined a recent special issue on the corporate elite "Going Global." In a September survey of corporate priorities, the *Wall Street Journal* concluded, "From New York to Nagoya, corporate leaders are entranced by the prospect of running a global business."

Globalization, like most such concepts, reflects certain developments in the real world. Since the late '60s, American corporations have been expanding overseas—with a quickening pace in the last five years. Firms such as

## BUSINESS

Colgate-Palmolive, Parker Pen and Dow Chemical now gain more than half of their profits abroad.

But the concept of globalization has also been used misleadingly in the debate over corporate regulation and foreign investment. Globalization has been employed to justify corporate opposition to managed trade as well as opposition to the regulation of multinationals and the monitoring of foreign investments. It has also been used to rationalize U.S. corporate actions that appear to be against the national interest.

**Buy global:** Although American business has been investing overseas for 100 years, firms did not originally establish what are now called "global corporations." When they set up overseas outlets in Western Europe in the 1950s, they usually created docile subsidiaries that sold or assembled goods that were made in the U.S. This kind of overseas investment actually benefited the American balance of trade.

But in the late '60s, corporations established two other kinds of overseas operations, both of which fall under the rubric of globalization. First, they created low-wage plants in Latin America and Asia, where goods were assembled and exported back to the U.S. and other industrial markets. Now, according to the U.S. Commerce Department, about 17 percent of U.S. imports come from branches of American corporations. Needless to say, such overseas operations cost the U.S. both jobs and dollars.

Second, the corporations set up relatively autonomous operations in other industrialized nations to produce goods specially tailored to markets in the host countries. These foreign operations were run by foreign nationals and often relied on foreign suppliers for parts and materials. The American home office often became simply a "branch" or "subsidiary" of the global corporation.

**Un-American capitalism:** NCR of Dayton, Ohio, formerly known as the National Cash Register Co., prides itself on having become a global corporation. NCR, which specializes in computers and automated teller machines, earns more than 60 percent of its \$6 billion yearly revenue abroad and has established manufacturing and distributing operations throughout Europe and Asia. About half of its 60,000 employees work overseas; fewer than 100 of them are American citizens. NCR President Gilbert Williamson says the corporation makes a point of "developing indigenous supplier networks."

Robert Reich of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government sums up the process: "The very idea of 'American' products made by 'American' firms is becoming obsolete."

Globalization ideology has developed alongside American global expansion. According to the ideology, American global expansion is part of a worldwide phenomenon that has made the idea of a national economy meaningless. It no longer makes sense to think in terms of American corporations or even American capitalism, because U.S. corporations are inextricably part of a global corporate whole. If policy-makers want to improve the health and welfare of Americans, the best way to do it is to improve the health of the entire global economy.

American corporate executives have used this ideology to justify opposition to measures aimed specifically at improving American industry. NCR, for instance, opposed the Reagan administration's semiconductor agreement with Japan, which was designed to aid American semiconductor producers. NCR was worried the agreement would alienate its Japanese suppliers and cause temporary price increases. Explaining his firm's outlook, Williamson told the *New York Times*, "I was asked the other day about U.S. competitiveness, and I replied that I don't think about it at all. We at NCR think of ourselves as a globally competitive company that happens to be headquartered in the United States."

In the name of globalization, companies have opposed creating U.S. consortiums that would compete with Japanese or European firms in the semiconductor or high-definition television market. At a symposium on industrial restructuring held last month at the National Academy of Sciences, Henry Wendt, chairman of the board of the multinational drug company SmithKline Beecham, argued against "an American consortium in competition with other countries," saying, "I don't think we can erect national boundaries

in this day and age."

Elite policy experts have used the concept of globalization to argue against a bill proposed by Rep. John Bryant (D-TX) that would require foreign investors to register their holdings with the Commerce Department. In the Council on Foreign Relations report, *After Reagan: Confronting the Changed World Economy*, C. Michael Aho and Marc Levinson write, "In the late 1980s, in a world with a

### The concept of globalization has been used misleadingly in the debate over corporate regulation and foreign investment.

large and growing degree of economic interdependence, questions of corporate nationality have come to possess little relevance. The physical location of a company's headquarters and the place of its incorporation are largely questions of historic accident and legal convenience, not matters of current economic importance."

**Impoverish the nation:** Like other ideologies, the ideology of globalization distorts the reality it reflects. Proponents of globalization talk as if they were part of a global movement, even though globalization is mostly an American phenomenon. It is occurring not from New York to Nagoya but from New York to Los Angeles.

Although Japanese corporations have been expanding overseas even more rapidly than American corporations, the vast majority of Japanese corporations are tightly con-

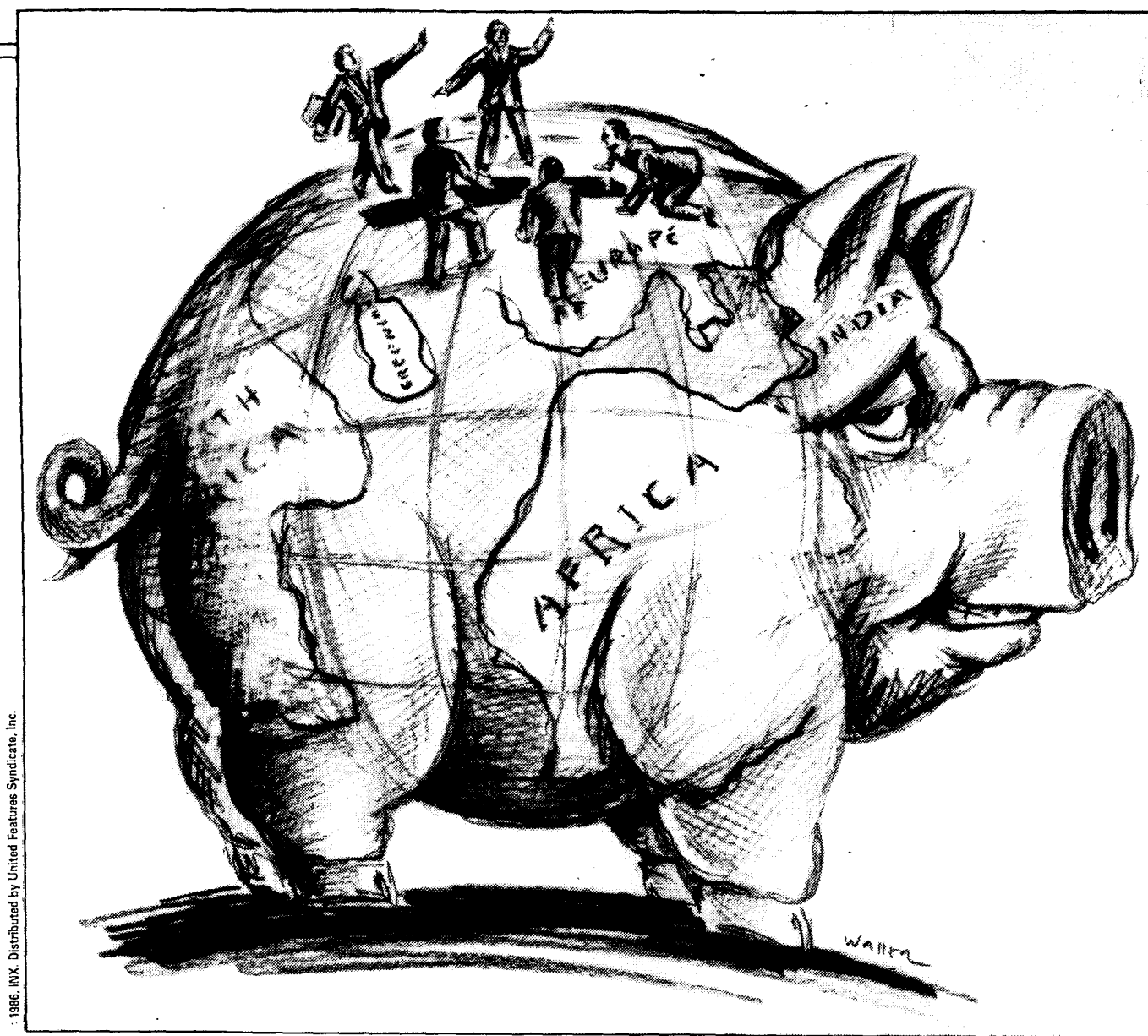
trolled at home and rely on Japanese suppliers for parts and materials. "To many Japanese investors, the U.S. is fundamentally an 'assembly platform' where products are put together for sale in our market," write Norman Glickman and Douglas Woodward in *The New Competitors*. Indeed, the Japanese economic agency MITI introduced the concept of globalization to American economic thought to ward off complaints about Japanese investment in the U.S., according to Pat Choate, an authority on foreign lobbying in the U.S.

Japan also restricts foreign investment. According to International Monetary Fund figures for 1986, foreign investment accounts for 3 percent of Japan's GNP, compared to 4.9 percent for the U.S. and 18 percent for Canada. In short, there may be no such thing as American capitalism, but there is definitely such a thing as Japanese capitalism.

Like Japan, European countries restrict both trade and investment. They use subsidies and import restrictions to maintain their steel industry, leaving the U.S. as the only major industrial country to import more steel than it exports. Countries in the European Economic Community force Japanese computer makers to use European chips in their machines.

American corporations are pursuing a global strategy because it is potentially profitable. "Everyone sees it as a winning proposition," one corporate official told the *Wall Street Journal*. But American global expansion and the unregulated expansion of foreign investment in the U.S. may not profit American citizens. Unregulated expansion, pursued in a world in which other nations closely guard their own interests, could rob Americans of both their jobs and their national sovereignty. □

IN THESE TIMES NOVEMBER 8-14, 1989 7



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## U.S. firms go for global profits



By Gordon Lewis

WEST BERLIN

**B**EATE PIUR HAS BEEN IN THE WEST FOR SIX months now. The shy 18-year-old came from East Berlin with her mother the legal way two years after applying for an emigration visa. For 23 of the 24 months that they waited for a decision, they received not a word on their status and sat on packed bags in anticipation of a sudden answer, which is what they got. Out of the blue they were told they had been declared stateless and had one week to leave the country.

The uncertain waiting would have been tolerable had it not been accompanied by a campaign of social ostracism by the au-

## GERMANY

thorities. Beate, class secretary of her school, was relieved of this position and subsequently thrown out of the official youth organization FDJ. Not that it particularly bothered Beate. "I never wanted to be secretary in the first place. I was too busy with sports. But there was no choice. The best student is the spokesman. That's it. And the best student was me."

"What really hurt," Beate continues, "was how I was treated at the sports club. I had really grown up at the club, and my coach was like a father to me. I received a coaching license, too. Then, literally a day after the application was sent in, I was relieved of my coaching duties. Even my coach distanced himself from me, although I could see it hurt. When we had competitions against other clubs I was suddenly benched, even though I was one of the best. Eventually I just stopped going at all."

Beate's mother, Astrid, had an even tougher time. "A few days after we filed our application I was called into Inneres [the interior ministry and state security police] and met an official, my employer and Beate's school principal. For over an hour they tried to talk me out of leaving. Later I was to be called back a number of times, each time the tone getting harsher, the insults crueler. At the child-care center where I worked, I was given menial office tasks to do. I wasn't officially fired, but they didn't permit me to work with the children anymore."

Why take on such a burden? For material gain? For access to the consumer paradise in the West? "It would be untrue to say that the living standards in the West didn't play a role," says Astrid. "We would watch Western TV, see the advertisements. We knew what we were missing. But that alone wouldn't have persuaded me to go through this torture. I lived well in East Berlin. Beate and I shared a comfortable two-bedroom apartment with central heating and most appliances. I earned 1200 marks a month; rent was 120, utilities maybe 20 marks. I had more money than I could spend. I was more concerned about Beate. I wanted her to have more of a future than a mediocre job. But if you want to get ahead you have to get politically involved. Otherwise, you will always remain a small fry. Beate is too talented to have to sell her soul to the party for a job she deserves on her own merits."

Beate concurs: "When my mother told me of her plans to emigrate, I was scared but agreed. I was tired of always having to have



East German refugees passing through Hungary wait in an International Red Cross camp.

## Refugees reviled in West after ostracism by East

two opinions—a public one and one I really meant."

**The young and the restless:** Beate and Astrid's story is similar to that of many refugees from the German Democratic Republic (GDR), whether they choose the legal way out or opt to try their luck either at gaining asylum at a West German embassy or leaving via the Austro-Hungarian border. In fact, Beate and Astrid would almost certainly have chosen one of the latter alternatives if the opportunity had arisen while they were waiting for their exit visas. Over 80 percent of those registered in the West upon arrival are 35 or younger, most of them under 25. On the whole, they are well educated and have solid career qualifications, which is not surprising since schooling in the GDR is accompanied by job training. Although the refugees are mostly young, they do not come primarily from any particular social class, according to West German state employment officials. The refugees are more a cross section of East German society—from plumbers and car mechanics to actors, singers and academics.

"What unites this group is their mobility," says Alois Streich, vice president of Berlin's employment office. "It is their ability to up and leave a secure position that distinguishes them from refugees in the past." Talks with the refugees themselves support this thesis. The decision to leave was almost always spontaneous. "The chance was there,

and we took it," said Andreas Martin, a 21-year-old metalworker from Jena. "It wasn't planned. We were on vacation on Lake Balaton [Hungary] like every other year. There are lots of Austrians there, too. They showed

**Graffiti on a Hamburg wall reads, "Critical fellow-citizens from the GDR, welcome! Conformists and wage-sinkers, no thanks!"**

us a Vienna newspaper with pictures of people crossing the border. We decided to give it a try."

Although the move from East to West requires some adjustment, most refugees have little trouble finding jobs. Craftsmen such as plumbers, carpenters and electricians are particularly sought after, since qualified ones are in short supply in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Waiters and salespeople also have little difficulty. But those in the technological sector often have trouble. Because of East Germany's labor-oriented and outdated industrial complex, few have learned to operate advanced machinery such as computers and robots and must be retrained. And hardest hit are academics, especially lawyers, who find that

they must virtually repeat their education if they want the same career as in the GDR. Teachers suffer, too, coming from a completely different and highly regimented educational system. What school in West Germany will hire a social-studies teacher who has always taught the subject from a Marxist perspective?

Unlike many of the FRG's domestic unemployed, refugees having trouble finding jobs have been willing to accept positions lower than those they have held before. Some hope to work their way to the top again. Others take courses on the side (paid for by the state) to get the qualifications they need. This has caused many West Germans to see them as "brown-nosers"—materialistic, consumer-oriented yes-men. As someone spray-painted on a wall in Hamburg, "Critical fellow-citizens from the GDR, welcome! Conformists and wage-sinkers, no thanks!"

Such sentiments are unfair. The East German refugees differ little from other immigrant groups, be they Vietnamese boat people, Jamaicans in New York City or Irish and Italians who came to the U.S. at the end of the last century. All these groups were characterized by mobility, willingness to work at jobs lower than they might like, and an urge to integrate—and hence conform—to their new society, and they all suffered from prejudice. It appears the East Germans won't escape this fate either.

**Leaving it all behind:** The East Germans' consumerism is natural, considering the circumstances under which they arrived. They left everything behind—cars, apartments, TVs, furniture, books—and arrived in the camps in West Germany with nothing more than a toothbrush and a change of clothes. Their money, being non-convertible, is useless in the West. Arriving with nothing, they need everything—cars, apartments, TVs, furniture, books. "Once they have the basic equipment," says Streich, "their consumerism should be no greater than that of the average West German citizen."

The East German refugees' alleged materialism has made many West Germans, especially on the left, suspicious of their motives for emigrating. Economic interests, not political oppression, compel them to leave, many argue. The Hamburg monthly *Konkret*, voice of the dogmatic left, criticized what it sarcastically called "the elevation of the desire for a chic sweater to the level of human rights." Such polemics hide the left's difficulty in determining just where the dividing line between political and economic motives lies.

"There is, in fact, no dividing line at all," said Volker, a theater technician from Potsdam who still lives in East Germany. "Take the following example: let us say I work in a factory here in the GDR. I see that our production facilities are outdated and our organization and morale weak. It's the same in every other factory, too. Therefore, our products are shoddy and people are dissatisfied. I want to improve this situation, but I can't because I don't have the freedom to speak out or make the changes necessary. I get frustrated, and I leave. Am I a political or economic refugee? It's like *perestroika* and *glasnost*: two sides of a dialectical question."

It appears that many among the German left have forgotten the basics of socialist

Continued on page 22



By Diana Johnstone

**A**FTER PILLAGING AFRICA OF ITS RAW materials, the West is ready to give something back. A third of the raw materials consumed by industry come out as waste. Africa is now getting much of that waste back—especially waste that is dangerously toxic.

In the '80s, sludge dealers have tried to dump U.S. and European waste onto at least 15 African countries; a trend exposed over the last couple of years by European environmentalists. Africa, already suffering from poverty, drought, famine, locusts, "contra" wars and the AIDS epidemic, was outraged at being assigned the role of "garbage can." The Organization of African Unity (OAU) vigorously denounced all such deals. When the Basel Convention for international control of toxic waste was concluded last March 22, African states refused to sign, demanding a total ban rather than regulation.

It is doubtful, however, that Africa has the means to protect its ecology and populations from the West's industrial poisons.

**Imbalance of power:** The case of the small West African state of Guinea-Bissau illustrates the extremely unequal relationship of forces. In October 1987 and February 1988, the country's government signed contracts with three companies, Intercontract of Switzerland and two British firms, giving Guinea-Bissau \$40 a ton to accept delivery of some 20 million tons of toxic waste—some of it from Detroit—over a 10-year period. Leading Italian sludge broker Gianfranco Ambrosini uses Intercontract to find dumpsites for Jelly Wax, a company that rounds up toxic waste from Western companies that prefer anonymity. Jelly Wax won notoriety in April 1987 when its leaky barrels turned up on a Venezuelan shore. A child died in agony, and other local people were poisoned.

When the contracts he had signed were made public in Europe, the first reaction of the Guinea-Bissau minister of natural resources and industry, Filinto Barros, was to deny the whole thing.

But European environmentalists went on to reveal that the Guinea-Bissau "desert" Ambrosini chose as the dumpsite, in the sea-coast region of Farim, was a waterlogged area where toxic leakage would have threatened the human population and essential wildlife, notably fish. Meanwhile, other African contracts were disclosed. On May 19 of last year, the European Parliament (EP) condemned the massive export of dangerous waste to developing countries and demanded cancellation of existing contracts. A few days later the demand was echoed at the OAU meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in a resolution calling toxic-waste dumping in Africa "a crime against Africa and African populations."

On May 30 Barros announced that Guinea-Bissau was giving up the deal—by far the most lucrative ever offered to that poor country.

The grim truth is that Guinea-Bissau, whose victorious liberation movement was a model of an independent Third World revolution, promoting self-help and local organization, has remained bogged down in misery during its 15 years of independence from Portuguese colonialism. Its trickle of trade in pursuit of "development" has brought it little other than a foreign debt of more than \$307 million—about twice the country's annual GNP.

The toxic-waste contracts, worth some

# Western developmental overdose makes Africa chemically dependent

\$800 million, were the only way in sight for Guinea-Bissau's government to balance the country's foreign trade. Intercontract had also promised to build a recycling plant that could turn Bissau's urban waste into "mater-

## TOXICS

ials for building roads and buildings." The toxic waste must have looked like manna from heaven to Guinea-Bissau's hard-pressed government. As for the country's people, they knew nothing at all. The revelations were made in Europe.

**Choking on chemicals:** European environmentalists stress that toxic-waste brokers like Ambrosini are doing the dirty work for giant chemical companies that prefer to stay out of such a sordid picture. The European chemical industry is about to choke on its own waste. Although the U.S. produces an estimated 87 percent of the world's toxic waste, West Germany exports the most. Vigilant local environmentalists have made waste disposal more strictly regulated, and thus more expensive, in West Germany than anywhere else—about six times more expensive than in Britain, for example. Switzerland, which also has a major chemical industry, lacks recycling or storage facilities. France, a big waste recycler, had to stop taking in its neighbors' waste in January

1988, because its recycling facilities were filled to capacity with domestic waste. European industry's favorite solution to the toxic-waste glut was to incinerate it in the North Sea. The sea was killed, environmentalists' protests were finally heard, and in October 1988, 63 countries agreed to stop waste incineration in the North Sea as of 1994.

The race is on to find a substitute. The obvious solution is Africa.

The simple approach was taken by Italian dumpster Gianfranco Raffaelli, who found someone in the Nigerian port of Koko happy to rent out his backyard for \$100 per month. For several months in 1987 and 1988, the

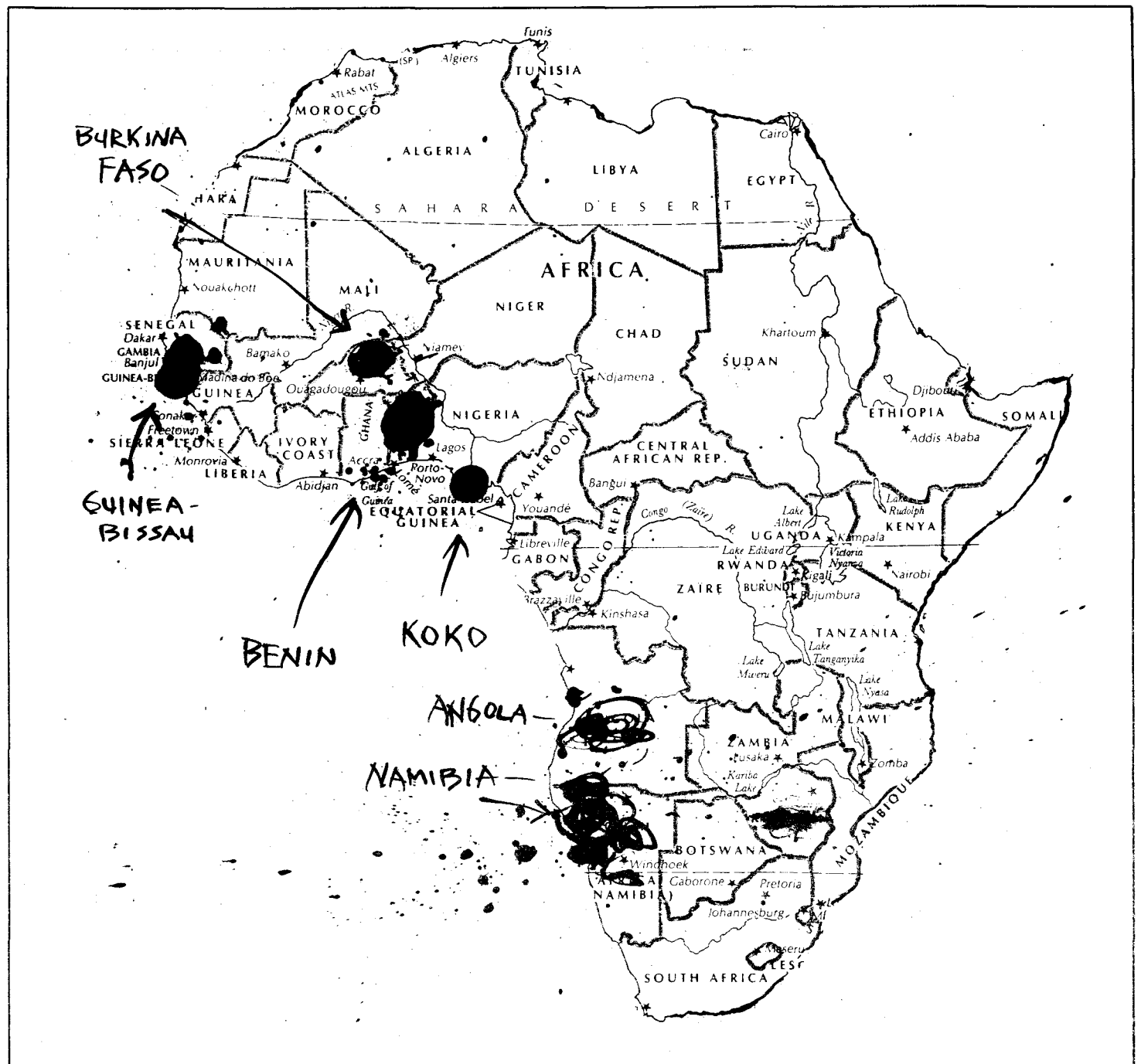
**One chemical firm got the government of Benin to take up to 5 million tons of toxic waste per year at an all-time low price of \$2.50 per ton. Benin has a foreign debt of \$700 million and no way to pay it.**

yard filled up with 8,000 barrels containing some 4,000 tons of deadly substances, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), collected by Jelly Wax from various Italian, Dutch, American, Norwegian and British companies. Furious, Nigeria has made dumping toxic waste punishable by life imprisonment.

A much more grandiose project was worked out by old Africa hand, sometime geologist and Katanga mercenary Arnold Andreas Künzler, who once was Ugandan dictator Idi Amin Dada's treasurer. In the fall of 1988 Künzler worked out tentative deals with Angola and SWAPO to build vast chemical-waste incineration plants in Southern Africa for the Swiss chemical giant Ciba-Geigy. The contracts, Künzler promised, would bring Angola \$2 billion that could be used to build schools and hospitals and revive the economy wrecked by the war of destruction waged by Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, backed by South Africa and the U.S. The deal apparently fell through when Künzler's Zurich partner Roland Straub, who was actually putting up the money, demanded an Angolan government post for Savimbi.

In January 1988 an obscure Gibraltar firm called SESCO got the government of Benin to sign a contract to take up to five million tons of toxic waste per year at an all-time

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low price of \$2.50 per ton. Benin has a foreign debt of some \$700 million and no way to pay it.

The scandals of 1988 led to the March 1989 Basel Convention, which set out to regulate toxic-waste transport. It recognizes "the right of every country to refuse to accept toxic waste." The African countries have all refused to sign.

"The Basel Convention is based on the freedom of a country to decide," explained Jean Martin Mbemba of the Congo recently. "We are against a government having the liberty to decide the fate of future generations." Mbemba called toxic-waste export "attempted murder of African people" and demanded that each country manage its own refuse.

"Africa doesn't want to become another Love Canal," he said.

Leading Nigerian environmentalist Ama-

dou Mamadou says it is cynical to say, as many do, that since the trade is going to go on anyway one might as well legalize it. This overlooks the real danger that Africa would end up specializing in toxic-waste recycling, he said.

Mamadou and others point to factors making Africa particularly unable to regulate toxic-waste imports. Geographically, most sub-Saharan countries have vast, sparsely populated territories that are not really controlled by any authority. There is also no serious control of Africa's coastal waters. Moreover, the populations are still largely illiterate and easy to fool. African countries lack not only recycling plants but also experts and facilities to determine the contents of shipments—something that is extremely difficult even in advanced countries.

Many African states, according to a Benin oppositionist, "are states based not on law but arrangements." Corruption is a way of

life.

At a recent Paris conference on European toxic-waste shipments to Africa, everyone agreed that a major problem was the lack of real democracy and an effective "public opinion" in most African countries.

"Our first problem is poverty," said Albert Tevoedjere of Benin. "Every state wonders how it will pay its functionaries at the end of the month. The second problem is ignorance. People can tell us anything. The third is lack of democracy."

"Certain countries are being asked to sell out their future generations for a few dollars, on the pretext that they have unused space on their territory," said Amadou Maurice Guiao, speaking for Burkina Faso, one of the poorest countries in Africa's drought-plagued Sahel region. Only a total ban can remove this temptation.

**Chemical independence:** The African reaction seems to be a firm and unanimous

"no" to toxic-waste dumping on their continent. But there are some dangerous cracks in this apparently solid front.

The African states that refused to sign the Basel Convention want to work out a special African convention of their own. "We want a code of our own to manage eventual imported waste and our own waste, for Africa will also industrialize," explained OAU representative Wawa Ossay Leba. Asked if this didn't contradict the OAU's demand for a total ban, Leba replied that "there has been a certain evolution in the African position from pure and simple rejection."

One can wonder whether the African rejection was not merely part of a bargaining process meant to raise the price of poisoning the African environment.

The Bush administration at first also rejected the Basel Convention in the name of freedom to make bilateral agreements but is reportedly coming around because it prefers the regulations of the convention to the total ban demanded by environmentalists. Between the needs of the waste-rich states to spew their excess poisons elsewhere and the needs of the dirt-poor states for a handful of dollars to pay their officials, compromise should not be impossible.

A major catch that can hook African states is their own need for waste-recycling technology. "Africa is collapsing under its own waste," said Albert Tevoedjere of Benin. "The Cairo sewers haven't been checked for 25 years. Africans are living with their own garbage."

Europe's waste brokers offer waste-recycling "technology transfer" as part of their package deals. Bettina Laville of the French ministry of cooperation in charge of aid to Africa says that transporting trash is the key to treatment and cannot be banned.

Another catch is that if the polluting industries cannot export their sludge, they will simply export the sludge-producing plants. They will call this "development" and "industrialization" and "creating jobs." Destitute African states are being asked to set up "industrial free zones" where multinationals can operate virtually without regulations.

Skeptical Africans predict that an African convention on toxic waste would be no more observed than other fine-sounding conventions, as on human rights. The continent lacks the expertise and political means to enforce regulations on toxic substances.

Toxic waste should not have to be an African problem. It is part of the "overdose of development in the rich countries," noted Enrico Falqui, Italian Green member of the EP. The solution must be tighter controls in Europe, where only an estimated 40 percent of toxic waste is registered. Falqui calls for an authority to control the quantity and quality of toxic waste in the producer countries.

Appeals to Europe or North America to feel responsible for places like Africa have usually turned out to be pretexts for colonial conquest. "The rich countries shouldn't use the problems they've created to recolonize Africa by technology," said Falqui. As long as the technical know-how to deal with toxic waste is not possessed by all countries, there must be a total ban on importation of such waste, said French Green EP member Didier Anger. Importation of polluting industries should be banned as well, he added.

If people in the rich countries can't take responsibility for controlling their own polluting industries, they can't expect impoverished African states to do the job. And chemical desertification of Africa is yet another threat to the planet. □

# 'Listen, my momma may have raised a mean child, but she raised no hypocrites.'

—Molly Ivins, *The Progressive*

## Molly Ivins on George Bush:

"Deep down, George Bush is shallow."  
*The Progressive*, March 1989.

"We do have some minimal standards for citizenship. Real Texans do not wear blue slacks with little green whales all over them. Real Texans do not refer to trouble as 'deep doo-doo.' George Bush has a hard time passing."  
*The Progressive*, March 1988.

"Now George Bush the Younger is running for governor of Texas. We call him 'Shrub.'"  
*The Progressive*, May 1989.

## Molly Ivins on Ronald Reagan:

"It's such a fun Administration—half of it is under average and the other half is under indictment."  
*The Progressive*, June 1988.

"If Reagan's IQ slips any lower, we'll have to water him twice a day."  
*The Progressive*, January 1987.

## Molly Ivins on Texas:

"The criterion for being considered an honest politician in Texas is as follows: If you can't take their money, drink their whiskey, screw their women, and vote against 'em anyway, you don't qualify."  
*The Progressive*, June 1989.

"Things are so bad in Houston, the lawyers are walking around with their hands in their own pockets."  
*The Progressive*, September 1986.

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SITD



By Chris Norton

SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR

**T**HE NAUSEATING STENCH OF HUMAN BODIES that had been blown apart lingered in the FENASTRAS union federation building in the wake of the October 31 bombing that killed at least 10 people in this city. Just before the blast, the building's entryway, which doubles as a makeshift dining hall, was filled with people eating and talking. The powerful bomb transformed it in a second into a scene of utter devastation.

I had been interviewing one of the FENASTRAS leaders on the second floor when the blast hit the building with a chilling roar. The air immediately filled with dust and smoke as the brittle duralite roof splintered

## EL SALVADOR

and cascaded onto our heads. The dust and smoke were so thick that initially it looked like a fire had ignited.

Then came the cries and whimpers of the wounded and dying downstairs, as people covered with blood began to emerge from the dark haze of dust. The first-floor dining room was unrecognizable, reduced to rubble.

Two young girls cried for their mother, one of the cooks. A unionist picked them up and carried them outside. Their mother lay where the blast had thrown her—against a wall. Her body would periodically struggle for a gulp of air, but she looked like she wasn't going to survive.

The wounded were carried to waiting Green Cross ambulances that quickly responded to the blast. At least four of the 30 wounded died in the hospital. Union leader Febe Elizabeth Velazquez died on the operating table.

Outside the building, the blast ripped a heavy metal fence like tissue paper and blew it across the street. A Toyota pickup truck



Kathe Kollwitz

## Upstairs at the bombing: the FENASTRAS attack

was thrown 30 feet, sparking initial reports that the explosion had been caused by a car bomb. A large depression in the building's entryway, however, made it clear the bomb had been placed there, where it could do the most damage.

Bomb attacks on left-wing union offices have become commonplace in El Salvador. The offices of the National Unity of Salvadoran Workers, the main umbrella group for left-wing unions, are bombed periodically. The National University has weathered several bombings. Even the Lutheran Church has been bombed. Most recently, bombs were set at the homes of opposition politician Ruben Zamora and his sister-in-law, Aronette Diaz de Zamora.

**Enemy number one:** But even before October 31, FENASTRAS had been bombed more frequently than any other opposition. Last

### Two young girls cried for their mother, who lay against a wall where the blast had thrown her.

week's blast was number four. Although the army labels most of the left-wing opposition unions "guerrilla front groups," FENASTRAS, one of the country's most militant unions, has always been viewed as the top enemy. The group is known for responding to the arrests of its members by burning public buses, and more FENASTRAS members have been "disappeared" than those of any other group.

In the pandemonium of sirens as volunteers carted off the wounded on makeshift

stretchers, surviving union leaders, some covered with blood, angrily accused the army of the attack. Since bombing came one day after guerrillas from the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) killed one and injured 15 people—almost all civilians—in a botched rocket raid on the Salvadoran army high command, it seems a logical conclusion.

But because serious criminal investigations are a rarity in El Salvador—especially when the victims are from the left—it will probably never be proven conclusively who placed the bomb at the FENASTRAS headquarters. The evidence is more clear, however, in another blast that occurred around 2:30 a.m. the day of the FENASTRAS bombing at the headquarters of the Committee of Mothers of the Disappeared (COMADRES).

A neighbor who was up late reportedly saw uniformed soldiers running from the COMADRES office only moments before the blast.

Because they cannot retaliate directly against the guerrillas who attacked the army high command, it appears that sectors of the military are retaliating against the unions and other popular organizations. But while opposition politician Ruben Zamora criticized the FMLN's carelessness in its attack on the high command, he noted that the army headquarters is a well-defended military target and an unguarded union headquarters is not.

In recent weeks peace talks between the guerrillas and the Salvadoran government were barely moving, and the bombings of FENASTRAS and COMADRES are likely to add to the tension. Many expect the guerrillas to avenge the Fenastras attack. Seen through the dusty air of the union's devastated headquarters, peace does not appear close in El Salvador.

Chris Norton is *In These Times* correspondent in El Salvador.

By James B. Goodno

**T**HANKS TO AN UNUSUAL FOREIGN-AID PLAN, the Philippines will probably receive the third-largest chunk of U.S. overseas assistance in 1990, coming in behind Israel and Egypt with an estimated \$600 million.

Much of the aid will be funneled through the Multilateral Assistance Initiative (MAI), a program developed largely by the U.S. after the People Power Revolution swept President Corazon Aquino into power in 1986. The MAI is a sort of mini-Marshall Plan, modeled after the post-World War II program for the reconstruction of Europe. It is funded by various donor nations—including Japan and members of the European Economic Community—as well as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

**Business as usual:** For U.S. policy-makers, financiers and business executives active in the Philippines, the victory of the "internationalists" in the Philippine government provides an apparently ideal situation. Dependency on foreign assistance leaves the Philippines open to U.S. pressures on military bases as well as economic policy and counterinsurgency—even if it does raise concerns about the prospects for economic development.

"Most likely nothing will emerge out of the Philippine aid program beyond a shopping list of projects and programs," wrote Gustav Ranis, a Yale professor and World Bank consultant. "We know that the development suc-

## U.S. aid to Philippines: an instrument of control

cess stories [in other countries] all managed to increasingly rely on the mobilization of their human resources—using natural resource exports and foreign capital to get there. All the odds are against anything like this happening in the Philippines."

But while some critics believe the MAI is

### PHILIPPINES

just a waste of money, others see it as something far more disturbing.

"The MAI is being used more to control rather than just aid," said Doug Cunningham, co-director of the Washington-based Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines. "Its supporters are concerned about taking a pro-business, pro-private sector approach and whipping up an anti-communist frenzy."

Washington-based activists and analysts believe the U.S. has two primary motives for pushing the MAI. The first is to prop up Filipino advocates of multinational business and international finance. The second is to strengthen support for U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

The Philippines house two major and several minor U.S. military bases. Last year, the Bush administration pledged its "best efforts" to deliver \$481 million in military and

economic aid over two years under the Military Bases Agreement. The agreement expires in September 1991, after which the Philippine government will have the authority to order the U.S. out. Many Filipinos, including a sizable number in government, believe the U.S. is getting a better deal than it deserves.

**Base-minded:** The Bush administration and many members of Congress expect the MAI to sway the Philippines toward an extension of the 43-year-old pact. To show its commitment to the island nation, the administration promised to seek \$200 million for the MAI during each of the next five years—subject, of course, to congressional approval.

Congress appears likely to approve \$160 million for the MAI this year, and some lawmakers haven't hesitated to demonstrate their willingness to use the MAI to pressure the Philippine government on the bases. "That is not a threat or a club," said Sen. Robert Dole (R-KS). "It is a fact."

Aside from guaranteeing extension of the bases agreement, U.S. policy-makers are also interested in counterinsurgency. Despite assurances from government and military officials, the U.S. remains wary of the continuing potency of the Communist Party of the

Philippines and its New People's Army. Officials at the Agency for International Development want to channel as much as 40 percent of the MAI monies to non-government organizations capable of challenging the left for popular support.

"It's important that we help the democratic institutions that were damaged during the Marcos era," Bryant George, a Manila-based AID official, told representatives of private U.S. volunteer organizations during a meeting at the State Department in July. George, while advocating "institutional pluralism," warned the U.S. groups against working with organizations deemed "communist" by the State Department.

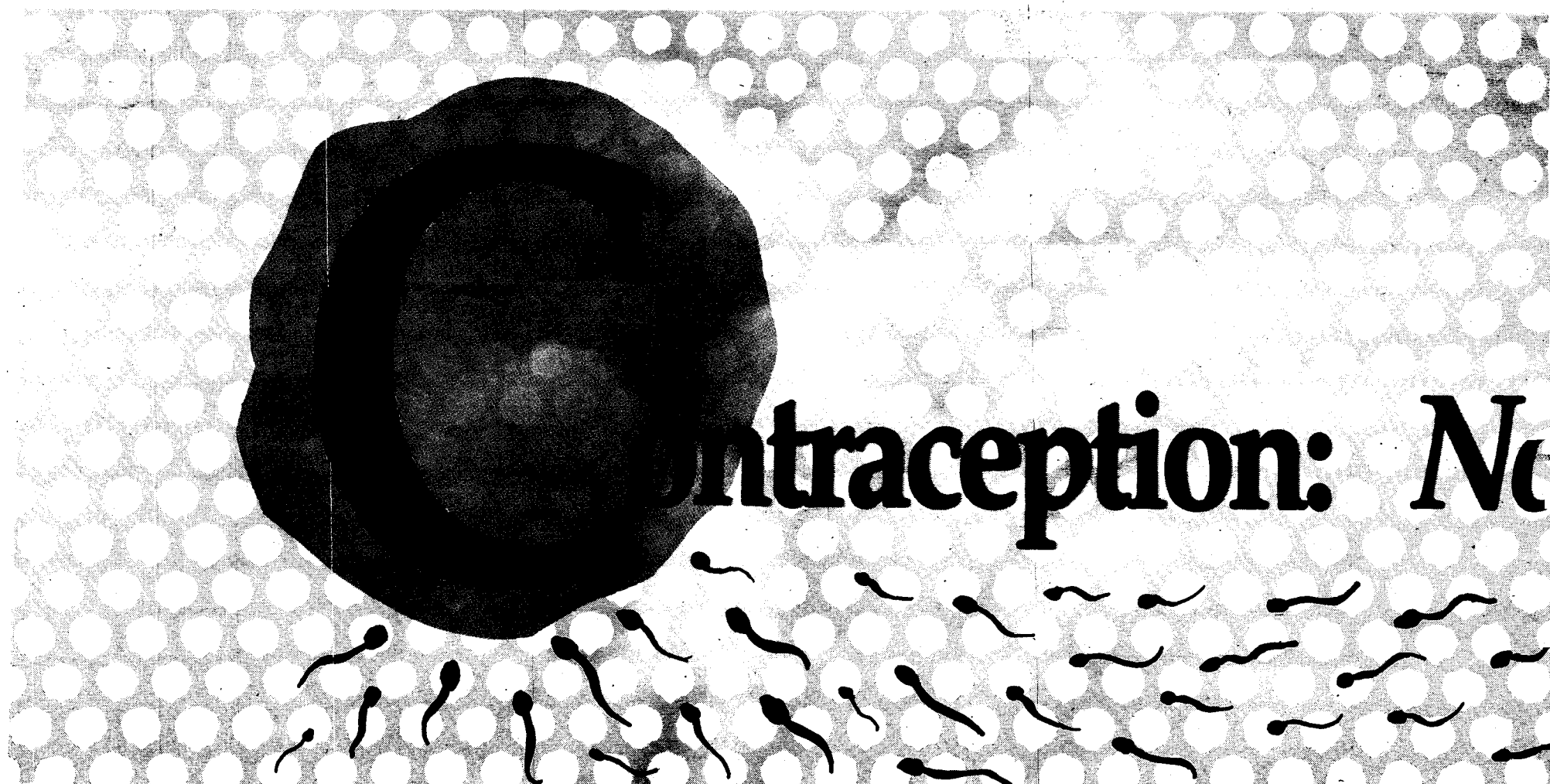
He noted that the Asia-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI) should be among the first private recipients of MAI funds. AAFLI, which is controlled by the right wing of the AFL-CIO, supports the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), a formerly pro-Marcos federation notorious for its opposition to the left-led anti-Marcos labor movement known as the May First Movement. Building up the TUCP is an obvious step aimed at countering the grass-roots left.

"It's all very frightening," said one development worker who attended the meeting. "I've been reading Jonathan Schell's book on Vietnam and Paul Vann's *Bright and Shining Lie*, and this sounds so much like what they were trying to do there."

James B. Goodno is an editor of *Dollars and Sense* magazine and author of the forthcoming book *The Philippines: Land of Broken Promises*.

IN THESE TIMES NOVEMBER 8-14, 1989 11





## By Katharine Greider

**L**ISA, WHO IS 21, HAS TRIED SEVERAL BIRTH-control methods and has not been happy with any of them. "It seems like every one involves some kind of physical or emotional pain," she says.

She has had two unplanned pregnancies. The first one happened after two months of taking the pill every day at the same time. Lisa had reluctantly gone back on the pill after two years of using condoms inconsistently. The pill, she says, caused her to have mood swings. When she discovered she was pregnant, she and her boyfriend split the \$420 cost of an abortion with general anesthesia. She stopped using the pill after the abortion because she was afraid that it, coupled with smoking, might do long-term damage to her health.

She then tried the diaphragm but quickly came to dislike it as well because it gave her urinary infections and hurt her during intercourse. She used it inconsistently and once again became pregnant. But this time she and her boyfriend couldn't afford the anesthesia. The abortion cost only \$195 but was "15 minutes of complete hell," she says.

In order to avoid another pregnancy, Lisa plans to try another version of the pill. She wonders, "Why should not wanting a child be painful?"

Lisa's story is a familiar one: more than half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned. As American women's right to legal abortion is being questioned, the only device that can prevent an unwanted pregnancy—contraception—is failing miserably.

Experts estimate that about 93 percent of fertile women in the U.S. use some form of birth control. Of course, many become pregnant accidentally because they do not practice contraception correctly and consistently. But often they fail to do so because, like Lisa, they are profoundly dissatisfied with available methods. The high rate of unplanned pregnancy spotlights not only the failure of American women to responsibly use birth control, but also the failure of birth control to meet women's needs.

Contraceptive development, galvanized in the '60s by the appearance of the pill and

the intrauterine device (IUD), has been in a state of torpor throughout the '80s. Indeed, under today's conditions, these revolutionizing methods might never have been produced.

In the past, money for research into new contraceptive methods came from the pharmaceutical industry and the federal government. But their commitment to contraceptive development has weakened significantly since the mid-'70s. Almost all major pharmaceutical companies have halted research into new methods. High costs, along with the risk of user liability and boycotts from anti-abortion groups, have made new contraceptive research bad business.

Independent research institutions, which must rely on inconsistent funding from the government and private foundations, are now responsible for the bulk of research and development. So contraceptive technology moves forward sluggishly, making the production of fundamentally new birth-control methods unlikely in the near future.

**New delivery systems:** Ideally, contraceptive options should be as varied as the bodies, lifestyles and beliefs of those who use them, especially since a woman's birth-control needs typically change several times during her reproductive years. Yet in a 1982 study, 60 percent of women surveyed said that they were not satisfied with *any* method currently available. In the '80s, couples have increasingly turned to surgical sterilization, making it the most common type of fertility control now practiced in the U.S.

Many have no regrets about their choice, but this trend may also indicate a lack of non-permanent methods that are safe, dependable and convenient. Julie Magnus, who counsels women with special birth-control needs at Planned Parenthood clinics in Chicago, says that about 30 percent of the women can't use any available methods, either for health or lifestyle reasons, or because they strongly dislike them. "And it's not fair to say you need to use a method even if you hate it," she adds.

Despite the need for new and different options, development over the last decade has concentrated on what one doctor calls "new delivery systems" of familiar methods. These

broaden women's choices, but because they work in ways similar to methods long in use, they also share some of their problems.

The cervical cap, first marketed in the U.S. in 1988, is a barrier method that works much like the diaphragm. Its smaller size makes it less likely to cause urinary infections, but it, like the diaphragm, is a poor method for women allergic to the spermicidal jellies and creams used with it, or who have difficulty planning ahead for sexual intercourse. The ParaGard IUD, which also hit the market last year, is a variation on past versions of the copper IUD, whose copper ions interfere with fertilization. Although highly effective, it is not recommended for women with no children or multiple sex partners, and it is also expensive.

Two additional options may be available in the near future. The female condom, a latex bag that lines the vagina, provides added protection against sexually transmitted diseases but has the same aesthetic drawbacks as the male condom. The other new method is the Norplant System, six tiny hormone-releasing rods implanted under the skin of the forearm that prevent ovulation for five years. Though it contains no estrogen, and thus poses less risk of cardiovascular problems than the pill does, it is not recommended for women with high blood pressure or a family history of strokes.

According to a 1986 report by the Guttmacher Institute, an independent non-profit research institution based in New York

## The information explosion can make a woman

While no fundamentally new birth-control methods have been developed in the last decade, the '80s have seen an explosion of information about available methods. But this information is often contradictory or confusing, leaving women worried about the safety and effectiveness of certain methods. Many are disappointed to find that additional information can actually make a woman's decision about contraception more difficult.

For instance, the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a non-profit research institution, recently released a study suggesting that the failure rates of birth-control methods are on average one-third higher than previously thought. It placed the pill's failure rate at 6 percent, the condom's at 14 percent, the diaphragm's at 16 percent, the rhythm method's at 16 percent and spermicides' at 26 percent.

These figures are based on the number of women who become pregnant using a given method, and, of course, take human error into account. Should a woman who has used the diaphragm effectively for 20 years be alarmed by these statistics? Dr. Gerald Zatuchni, fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, acknowledges that use-failure rates

accurately reflect the experience of groups of women but cautions that an individual cannot read her own future in a statistic, no matter how precise and unequivocal the available information.

"The underlying psychological issue for people is: 'What is going to happen to me?'" says Dr. Beverly Winikoff of the Population Council, a contraceptive research and development institution. This question is being asked by scores of pill users, terrified by recent studies indicating a greater link between the pill and breast cancer.

"Panicking people is a very dangerous thing," says Dr. Gabriel Bialy, head of the contraceptive development branch of the U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Evidence suggests that every time a panic occurs, a number of women stop taking the pill and get pregnant. But the most recent information is not necessarily the most reliable; earlier, more extensive studies show little connection between pill use and breast cancer. The media tends to portray new scientific studies as separate from the larger body of existing data, giving the mistaken impression that the new studies are the most accurate. As family-planning



# news is bad news

City, the technological potential exists to create drugs or devices that could work in ways fundamentally different than those now available. For example, vaccine-like drugs could create an "immunity" to the hormone that allows the uterus to support a pregnancy. Other drugs could interfere with the production of male sperm or female eggs by blocking the function of hormones in the pituitary gland; presently no birth-control method directly affects "master control" centers of the body. Scientists predict that this type of drug would impact only the reproductive system, and therefore cause fewer side effects. But the Guttmacher report says that without a massive infusion of funds for contraceptive research, these drugs—

now in the very early stages of development—may never reach the market.

**Birth control as a commodity:** It's a good bet the money won't come from the pharmaceutical industry. Contraceptives are incalculably valuable to the women who use them, but to the companies that produce and market them, they are no more valuable than any other product. Because corporations have in recent years found it difficult if not impossible to profit from the development and marketing of new birth-control devices, only one major U.S. company, Ortho Pharmaceutical Corp. (a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson) continues to research new contraceptive methods on a significant scale. Lisa Kaeser, a policy analyst at the

Guttmacher Institute, estimates that the amount of money firms spend on contraceptive development has declined by 25 percent since the mid-'70s.

Since the pill's development, pharmaceutical companies have devoted a large portion of their contraceptives budget to improving it. The low-dose pills introduced earlier in this decade make oral contraception safer and more comfortable since they contain smaller amounts of hormones, thereby causing fewer side effects and lowering the risk of long-term health problems. But companies chose to invest in the pill for financial reasons: it had already traveled the long road to the marketplace and was being sold to millions of women each month.

Experts estimate that development of a new method would require an investment of tens of millions of dollars and 10 to 15 years of research. Registration with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), while considered indispensable by many consumer and family-planning groups, is lengthy and expensive. The invariably long research process shortens a product's patent life, and companies are reluctant to invest in a product that others may eventually profit from. And once a new product reaches the market, there is no guarantee that it will sell.

Pharmaceutical companies' incentive to develop new birth-control methods is further diminished by the growing controversy surrounding these products. A controversial drug or device may place a company's non-contraceptive products at risk of boycott by anti-abortion activists. The Upjohn Co. cited this reason in 1986 when it withdrew its application for FDA registration of Depo-Provera, a hormone injection that prevents pregnancy for up to five years.

But the main reason companies drop out of contraceptive development and marketing is to avoid lawsuits by the women who use their products. This litigious atmosphere was sparked in part by the widely known story of the Dalkon Shield. An IUD with a multifilamented string that hung down into the vagina and allowed bacteria to travel through the cervix and into the uterus, it caused severe pelvic infections and sometimes infertility. A.H. Robins, which manufac-

tured the shield and was not candid about its dangers, was driven out of business by successful lawsuits.

One result of this spate of lawsuits was that the IUD was all but eliminated as an option for American women. Searle, for instance, withdrew two of its IUDs even though it considered them safe. The company successfully defended several lawsuits targeting these products, but the suits were so costly that Searle decided to stop marketing its IUDs. The only one that has remained on the market since its introduction, the Progestasert, has survived in large part because of its limited availability; it has always been marketed to relatively well-off women through their private physicians.

**Not a government priority:** On the federal level, funding for the contraceptive development branch of the Center for Population Research at the U.S. National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) has remained at about \$8 million since the late '70s. This represents a 40 percent decline in real purchasing power over the last decade.

According to Dr. Gabriel Bialy, head of the branch, "Funding [for the contraceptive development branch] is limited, and this indicates that this is not a high priority for the administration."

Dr. Antonio Scommegna, the developer of the Progestasert IUD, agrees, but he points out that federal funding for all scientific research has declined and that the research community has marshaled a large portion of its funds to search for cures to life-threatening diseases such as AIDS and cancer.

In addition, the anti-abortion movement has played a significant role in making birth-control development an unpopular political cause. "The anti-abortion movement has managed politically and through the media to lump abortifacients with birth-control pills and the IUD," says Dr. Gerald Zatuchni, fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Northwestern University Medical School. While experts agree the pill inhibits ovulation, they are divided over

## r's choice more difficult

experts point out, the studies' authors frequently warn that their data is inconclusive.

The question of whether to publish such data, says Bialy, poses a "real ethical dilemma." While scientists don't want to withhold information from the public, they also want to avoid creating a panic based on incomplete information. Most of the research on the pill has focused on higher-dose pills that were marketed in the '60s and '70s. They are believed to have been more dangerous than today's low-dose pills.

Clearly, this research fails to definitively answer the most pressing question for pill users: does it increase their cancer risk or not? "The jury is more out than ever on this issue," says Susan Tew of the Guttmacher Institute.

Bialy concurs, saying, "If you go into a room with 20 epidemiologists, they all look at the data through a different set of glasses. If something is self-evident, there's no argument." Family-planning experts agree that more research is needed, but they generally believe that the panic surrounding the pill is disproportionate to its actual risks, which may be outweighed by its considerable bene-

fits. Still, many women who continue to use the pill do so uneasily. "What statistics cannot tell you," Bialy says, "is if you will be the one victim."

Women's demand for a greater role in their own health decisions has placed them in the position of digesting and interpreting information about birth control that often even confuses the experts. Doctors frequently avoid giving direct advice. And before prescribing birth control, doctors routinely ask patients to read and sign consent forms to verify that they have been advised of a given method's potential health risks.

"The trend is dictated mostly by litigation," says Dr. Zatuchni. "We are forced to tell patients all the bad-news stories, none of the good ... and you make your choice. I'm not sure the patient is better off, but that's the way the system is working."

This can enable women to rely more on their own instincts about birth control, and on the messages they get from their own bodies about what is good for them. "It's somewhat empowering for women," says Diane Judge, nurse practitioner at the University of Chicago's Womancare, "but it's also really scary." —K.G.

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES NOVEMBER 8-14, 1989 13





United Feature Syndicate

## 'Inadvertent' assassinations get congressional OK

In what is being billed as a compromise reached with the Senate two weeks ago, President Bush gave up his attempt to gain a free hand in assassinating heads of countries who, like Manuel Noriega, have fallen from administration favor. But while the ban still stands on paper, Bush did reach an agreement that gave administration operatives what the *Congressional Quarterly* called "some flexibility in interpreting the ban on assassinations of foreign leaders." Exactly what that means is unclear, except, of course, that American officials and agents will still be able to participate in planning foreign coups as long as assassination is not the intent of the plot. But, as the *Chicago Tribune* pointed out, "no one can be sure what will happen in a coup, and it would be naive to think overthrowing a leader might not result in killing a leader."

It's difficult to see what was compromised here, other than the nation's honor and the most basic principles of international law. And it's equally difficult to see who is more odious, the senators who worked out the compromise or the president. Bush, being an upholder of law and order, did not want to violate the law during the recent coup attempt in Panama, so he tried to secure an end to the ban on assassinations. Congress, which must operate more openly, did not want to give official sanction to assassinations, so it gave the president more leeway in conducting coups in which the overthrown leader might inadvertently be killed.

This is not to suggest that a conspiracy exists between Congress and the White House to roll things back to pre-Contragate days. Many members of Congress have been genuinely concerned about uncontrolled CIA activities, and especially about the international embarrassment that results from secret illegal administration activities. They have wanted to be informed about all covert actions and to have some supervision of the CIA. The compromise worked out on the first of these provides that Bush will tell Congress in advance about CIA covert operations—except in rare cases when "time is of the essence," when he will do so "within a few days," or when he decides that he must act in secret "on constitutional grounds." This may not seem like much of a compromise, but as Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman William Cohen (R-ME) explained, anything more stringent would have been vetoed, and the votes are not there to override a presidential veto.

On the question of CIA supervision, the Senate Intelligence Committee acted with a little more resolve. They approved a requirement for an independent inspector general at the CIA, to be appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The new inspector general, unlike the one now appointed by the CIA director, would have broad authority to investigate illegal actions, as well as mismanagement and other problems. Whether this requirement will make it into law is doubtful, given Bush's opposition to it, but at least the issue has been framed and is subject to public discussion.

Congressional weakness on these issues has nothing to do with Bush's popularity. Rather, it flows from the absence of any principled difference between the leaders of Congress and the president. From our point of view it is better for Congress to be informed in advance of any proposed presidential actions and for it to supervise the CIA, but only because Congress is more accessible to the public and more susceptible to popular opinion. But to the public at large, the dispute between the two branches of government must seem like nothing more than a turf war. And it will continue to look that way until some congressional voices are heard challenging the idea that carrying out coups is an acceptable activity for a nation that likes to think of itself as the most democratic on earth. Is turnabout fair play or "state terrorism"?

On a related front, Iran last week gave us a glimpse of the potential dangers in the administration's imperious stance when its parliament approved a bill permitting the arrest in other countries of American citizens convicted by Iranian courts. This was a direct response to an announcement by U.S. Attorney General Richard Thornburgh three weeks ago that he had authorized the FBI to arrest people wanted by American courts without the permission of the governments of the countries in which they are seized. Two U.S. laws, enacted in 1984 and 1986, had given American authorities jurisdiction to prosecute terrorist acts involving American citizens overseas but not the power to arrest them without foreign government permission.

Iran's chief justice, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, explained that in passing their bill, the parliament was reacting to the "bullying nature of the United States," and that they intended to use the new law to counter "U.S. terrorist moves" in all countries that allowed the United States to seize foreigners on their soil.

Next, Iran and other countries might respond to the Bush administration by authorizing their intelligence agencies to stage coups and assassinate leaders in countries they don't like. If so, the American media will no doubt discover that this is unacceptable behavior and condemn them as state terrorists, even though they will only have been following the lead of the leader of the free world.

## IN THESE TIMES

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# LETTERS

## Self-determination

**I** DO NOT MEAN TO MAKE LITTLE OF JOEL BLEIFUSS' genuine concerns about Lithuanian "irredentism" (In Short, Oct. 25). There are certainly elements throughout the region who nourish such visions of a "Greater Lithuania." Moreover, there is enough in the recent history of the Baltic nations, certainly from the era of independence through incorporation into the Soviet Union, to justify concerns about democratic principles, cultural diversity and human rights. Still, what is happening in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia has enormous democratic and progressive potential. One cannot read the materials circulated by the independence movements, or listen to the debates within and without the Communist parties, for example, and fail to realize that the aspirations of so many are rooted in equally long-held traditions of social democracy and humanism.

If Bleifuss' fears are specifically about those fringe elements and movements that our government and others have supported, that's one thing. But if his concerns are broader, to include the genuine aspirations of the Balts for autonomy, self-determination and independence, that is another thing altogether. We cannot stand for these principles in one place and not another. Soon, one would hope, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will make another incredible set of statements about recent Soviet history, and that this time he would declare the annexation of the Baltic republics to have been an illegal and immoral act and commit the Soviet Union to a path of mutual recognition and cooperation between his nation and the independent republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

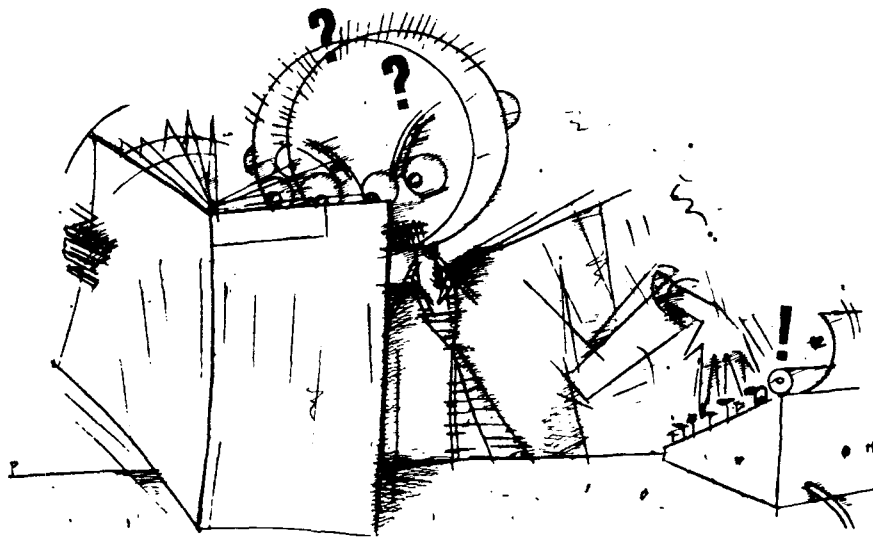
Mark B. Lapping  
Manhattan, Kan.

## Neutral technology

**J**OEL BLEIFUSS (IN SHORT, OCT. 18) COMMENTED on an article in *Futurist* by Joseph Pelton. Pelton predicted the coming of "electronic imperialism," where workers would do their jobs at home and send in their work via telecommunications.

I myself helped set up a telecommunications "work" network just like this last summer. However, instead of trying to exploit remote cheap labor, I wanted to create a means in which remote expertise could easily be shared to further the revolution in Nicaragua. A connection, or node, was installed in Managua to an international computer-based telecommunications network, knowing that there were many people who wanted to participate directly in the efforts in Nicaragua but who didn't have either the wherewithal or the opportunity to go there in person. I left Nicaragua in January 1989, but the connection still exists and provides a great service to many people.

Pelton further points out that "we could see the creation of 'telecolonies' whose local finances and politics are largely controlled from an overseas capital." Well, it didn't take telecommunications to already have places in which local finances and politics are completely—nonetheless largely—controlled from an overseas capital. High technology shouldn't be feared for



its own sake. If it can be used to provide a service to the betterment of mankind, then it should be used and hailed.

Ward Larkin  
Houston

## Survival lesson

**W**HEN I FIRST READ THAT FERDINAND MARCOS had died, I experienced a feeling of déjà vu. Where or when had I heard this before? Then I remembered the shah.

In dying, Marcos has joined a very exclusive fraternity where he will meet colleagues like the shah of Iran, Somoza of Nicaragua, Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, etc. Without mental effort you might be able to name others.

From published reports, all these men were installed by the U.S. or with U.S. acquiescence. When they failed to control their people or thought they were strong enough to act independently, they were toppled and later destroyed because they were no longer useful to the imperial mandates of the U.S. multinationals and empire builders of our State Department.

There is a lesson here. Keep being useful to the U.S., even if you have to exterminate all your countrymen. Would-be dictators like Adolfo Calero and Jonas Savimbi know this well.

Frank De La Rosa  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Agnew the Northerner

**J**OHN JUDIS' ARTICLE ON RICHARD NIXON (ITT, OCT. 4) was excellent. But he is wrong in saying Spiro Agnew "was a Southerner rather than an Easterner." Most Southerners would

agree with me that someone from the Baltimore suburbs is no more "Southern" than a drug czar from North Carolina's research triangle. Furthermore, Judis seems to forget that in 1968 Spiro Agnew was no conservative hero. He was, in fact, a Rockefeller liberal who'd won the black vote when he'd run for governor against an old style, truly "Southern" Democratic segregationist. He came to the 1968 convention committed to Nelson Rockefeller.

That he later emerged as Patrick Buchanan's mouthpiece was something of a surprise to his erstwhile political allies and attributed to his corrupt cynicism.

John A. Keller  
Summit, N.J.

## Inattentive

**I**F HUANG MEI YUEN HAS NOT HEARD ANY "civilized" or "intelligent" discussions respecting abortion, as claimed (Letters, Oct. 11), he has not been listening closely to pro-choice advocates. That is probably why the writer confuses "pro-abortion" with "pro-choice." Why is this distinction so hard for some to understand? If I defend Catholics against cross-burnings, it does not signify that I am pro-Catholic; it means only that I am pro-choice on religion as well as reproduction. Women's rights activists, "so-called," in Yuen's terminology, defend women's abortion rights because without that option women trapped in harmful pregnancies would have no alternative left to unwilling childbearing.

Our "so-called" women's rights activists did not choose this battlefield in place of struggling for long-term goals; it was forced on them. Leaving the field while this option is in jeopardy is tantamount to postponing

vital surgery until the government gets around to providing universal health care. Unhappily, pregnant women can't afford to wait for the millennium. I would cordially invite all anti-abortion "moderates," if such there be, to do all they can to prevent intolerable pregnancies, as long as it does not involve tyrannizing our sisters.

Let me note, in closing, that there is no such thing as "social pressure" on "reluctant" women to abort, as the writer claimed. Polls show a solid majority in favor of every woman reaching her own decision over a problem pregnancy, in accordance with her own situation, her own needs and her own religion. Choice is neutral on all options.

Audrey Patton  
Minneapolis

## Ignorance

**I**N RESPONSE TO HUANG MEI YUEN'S DIATRIBE (Letters, Oct. 11) on what feminists *should* do about abortion: I am damn sick and tired of non-feminists, first, presuming that they know anything about what feminists do, think or are and, second, that they are entitled to dictate to us what we *should* do, think or be.

The writer's ignorance, while patent throughout, is most clearly revealed by the suggestion that feminists should subordinate abortion-rights advocacy to an "abortion prevention" agenda: to prevent unwanted pregnancy.

We have struggled for years to preserve contraceptive access for the poor and underaged, to open up options for women who want children as well as those who don't (by keeping in-vitro fertilization legal in the face of right wingers who believe it flouts their god's will), and to make motherhood an economically viable option for women and children who do not have a private income sufficient to maintain a family. The feminist agenda is a hundred times larger than the issue of abortion rights, unlike our opponents, whose entire program is limited to enforcing mandatory pregnancy without regard for the social consequences.

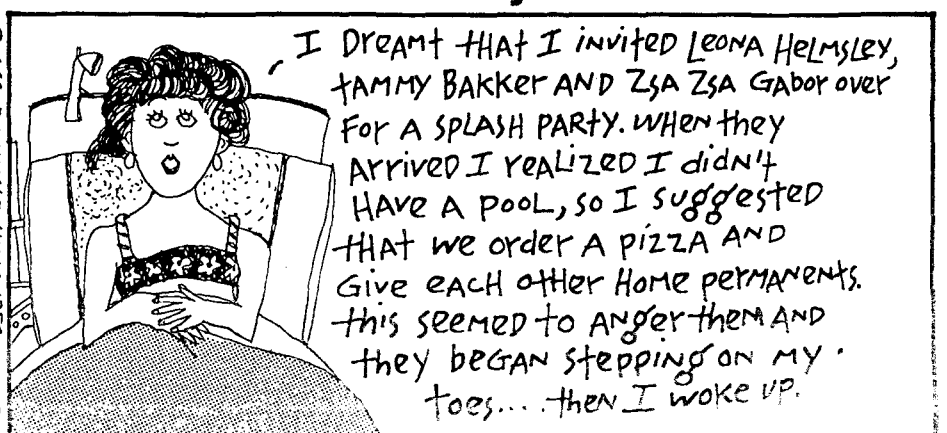
Lisa Small  
Arlington, Va.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander





# China's woes caused by longtime policy

By Lee Tien Wong

**I** DO NOT CLAIM TO HAVE A FIRM GRASP on the current situation in China. I do not think anyone does—not even the Chinese government. But the distortions and limitations of the Western media are clear. Americans complain that journalists writing about the U.S. are superficial and cannot get things right. Imagine what happens when they go to China.

For example, the Western media seem to think Deng Xiaoping's cover-up of the massacre is largely a success. What I have heard from intimate contacts in China assures me that this is not so. The Chinese people know what has happened, perhaps better than we do. But don't expect them to say so. Over the centuries, "inscrutability" has been developed to an instinctive level by the Chinese people, as a sort of protection for having no Bill of Rights.

My own feeling, which results from following news reports, has been that in mid-May, when the students defied the government's deadline to leave the square, there was a distinct change in the "pro-democracy movement." Before that time, the students were making it clear that they were patriotic, socialistic and not demanding radical changes. They wanted to end corruption and enhance freedom and democracy, as did many throughout China. Some of those changes are now being addressed by the government.

In May the students began emphasizing demands such as that Deng and Li Peng must immediately be banished. How could any government respond to such demands? Remember what involved processes were Watergate and Irangate, etc.?

On top of this was a change in the tone of the May pro-democracy movement, which could only be interpreted as being directly favorable to Western interests. Although this mood was created by the failures of the Communists, there is no question about some degree of CIA and Taiwanese influence. It is an accepted fact even in the Western press that the CIA financed the "underground railroad" by which student leaders escaped. Obviously, to set up such a railroad the CIA must have had deep involvement. I also doubt that the huge numbers of people in the demonstration could have all afforded to neglect their affairs for so long without outside funding. And even before the massacre, people from China were mentioning the presence of Taiwanese agents.

**Outside influence:** Of course, how much Taiwan and the CIA actually influenced the student movement is unknown. One cannot trust reports from either side. But the determined presence of CIA and Taiwanese agents, with all kinds of money to throw around, was as certain as saying there will be flies at a picnic.

In addition to following the television reports (which were rather pointless and emotional) and the *New York Times* (whose two China correspondents were somewhat more thoughtful), I have of course spoken intimately to people from China with direct ties to Beijing University and other areas. I think the idea of thousands of people mas-

sacred was overblown. The massacre was bad but was most probably hundreds, not thousands.

There is no way any government would tolerate its major nerve center being occupied and many government offices held up for eight weeks in such a manner. Remember how during the Depression Gen. MacArthur on a white horse had the "bonus marchers"—World War I veterans—literally beat out of Washington? More recently were the '60s protest marches on the Pentagon and elsewhere that were forcefully

**Deng erased everything positive done by Mao, even the requirements for political education of the students. This was why the students were so incredibly naive.**

broken up. Nonetheless, there is no question that the Deng government acted unwisely in shooting the people down.

**Chinese-American press:** I also followed reports of the demonstrations and massacre in two Chinese-language newspapers published in New York. One of them, *Overseas Chinese Daily*, was outright Communist and financed by Beijing. That newspaper folded because it became somewhat critical of Beijing during the demonstrations—so their funding was cut off. The irony is that this allows the unchallenged predominance of the large Taiwanese propaganda networks. So Beijing has cut its own throat and handed the whole field over to Taiwan. To me this symbolizes the crass stupidity of the entire Deng regime.

Another Chinese newspaper I followed was *Central Daily*. This was the most non-partisan Chinese-American newspaper I could find. This newspaper is now also gone as a result of the massacre! It depended on advertising from Chinatown. According to the statements in *Central Daily*, Taiwanese agents and the international Taiwanese propaganda newspaper, *World Journal*, created pressure on the advertisers and cut off their business.

*Central Daily* was somewhat schizophrenic—printing editorials in favor of Deng's economic reforms but also reporting on atrocities in China. On the whole, they were simply printing all kinds of information nobody wanted to hear. They interviewed former student leaders from Beijing who had wanted to end the protest in May—believing they had already achieved their goals and that nothing could be gained by staying. These original student leaders were outvoted and stripped of their leadership. By the time of the massacre, a notable number of students with similar views had probably already left. Of course, you hear nothing about this in the English-speaking press.

**Deng vs. Mao:** In my opinion, the student protesters as a whole were themselves a product of the Deng regime. Deng erased

everything progressive done by Mao Zedong, even the requirements for political education of the students. This was why the students were so incredibly naive. Now the government recognizes this mistake, and I hear it is returning to political education. But this cannot reverse the damage created by Deng.

I believe Marx wrongly ignored the essentially "spiritual" side of human nature. Mao, for all his shortcomings, was not a hard-line Marxist but understood the spirit of China. That spirit must be addressed before there can be any material progress toward a better socialism or any kind of healthy society.

When Mao sent students to work on farms, for instance, this was not his idea. This was a traditional Chinese ideal practiced even by the Nationalists. Mao only made it mandatory instead of voluntary. Right into the 20th century, China was a very feudal society. Chinese were brought up believing that scholars must never get their hands dirty, that scholars were an entirely different class from the peasants. So for many people to earn the distinctions of a higher education and then to find themselves with pigs running around would be "intolerable." So, of course, you are going to hear horror stories and exaggerations.

Clearly, the Cultural Revolution was not always carried out in the best manner. How could it be? China is a very big country, suffering culturally from centuries of the worst forms of capitalism and feudalism combined. The horrors of 19th-century China were unimaginable. The West misses the spirit behind the Cultural Revolution and the fact that it was succeeding in some areas. Even today I hear that the generation who went through the mandatory farming experience is respected as having achieved a certain spirit of universal awareness and dedication. This is expressed in special phrases that are difficult to translate.

Of course, Mao was the one who destroyed Chinese culture. During the Cultural Revolution, Confucius, all the classics, every outstanding creative work of China's past was vilified as totally evil—even though Mao himself, like the head of the

totally autocratic society in the novel *Brave New World*, wrote beautiful poetry, reportedly loved the classics and probably had every one in his study. The predictable result of Mao's extreme cultural iconoclasm was that the people would lose respect for themselves and idealize the West. I am somewhat amused to hear, now that the crisis has surfaced, that in order to regain some national pride, the Communists are beginning to be the defenders of many traditions they were once wiping out.

The point is that when Deng came to power his message was something like: "Money and technology are the priorities." The need for this capitalistic emphasis is obvious because China is so far behind the West. But Deng is without any notable ability, has abandoned the idealism of Mao and has broken all restraints to indiscriminately embracing Western culture. The result is that Beijing now has everything from prostitutes to gangster-style millionaires driving around in Rolls Royces, not only existing but actually respected by the people.

Of course, China is not the only socialist country having an "identity crisis." The recent mass migration of people from East Germany probably results from a similar mood. The problem is that neither the leaders nor the people sincerely believe in a cooperative society. They believe only in competing with the West. True socialism cannot compete with capitalism—not under the terms of capitalism—because under socialism you cannot have half the people climbing over the bodies of the other half.

Capitalism is already proven a total failure. Before World War II, when it was saved by becoming a "multinational" economic parasite, the history of America in spite of all its vast resources was an incredible series of depressions and wars. But just before every depression or war there is a speeding-up of the economy, and of propaganda, when the magnetic attraction of capitalism is at its peak. As the classical Chinese poet once said, "When the politicians start beating on drums and shouting that everything is all right, then you know it's over." This is the true wisdom of China. ■

**Lee Tien Wong** is a pseudonym for a Mainland China-born scholar and student of Chinese politics and philosophy.

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## Flags, Labia, Fax: The Censors' Complex Tasks

So far as the more respectable element of the city's populace is concerned, the earthquake has at least had the beneficial consequence of changing national perception of San Francisco in a manner far beyond the power of the most artful public-relations campaign. Once synonymous with Sodom, San Francisco now occupies a rank in public esteem roughly equivalent to that of London during the blitz, a town where selfless citizens exhibited stoic calm and gallantry under the most trying conditions. But, of course, tourists don't visit San Francisco in search of stoic calm, and soon the city fathers will be recalling with nostalgia the profitable aspect embodied in the reputation of what *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen calls Baghdad-by-the-Bay.

In the pre-quake September days, before the stars moved into planetary convergence and the earth prepared to move, there was an exhibition about censorship at the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery. Many of the exhibits displayed scant respect for Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC), foe of the U.S. National Endowment of the Arts (NEA). A silk-screen print by Jos Sances showed a man urinating on Helms' head, and a video and sculpture assembled by an art collective called Subversives showed a crucifix with Helms' face hovering over a jar of amber fluid. Another mixed-media work by Dean Ouellette showed bloodied forks stabbing photocopied photos of nude men. It was entitled "Jesse, I Won't Cut Fresh Flowers for You." But the Arts Commission Gallery is not above exercising a bit of censorship itself. The previous show had been called "Tableaux 3 Vivants" and included a piece by Billie Grace Lynn called "Android Madonna." Admirers of this work could crawl inside a substantial wire womb while a performance artist, with no clothes on and daubed with red paint, warbled womb sounds.

At one stage in the period of exhibition, visitors were also able to view a sign placed next to the work that read as follows: "Notice: This piece has been altered as a result of curatorial requirements. Two American flags, which covered the entrance into the womb of the 'Madonna,' have been removed and replaced by plastic netting." Next to this notice, placed there by the artist, Billie Grace Lynn, was another one from the gallery's curator, Christine Tamblyn. This one read as follows: "The use of the flag cheapened the aesthetic quality of the piece by invoking complex political issues in a simplistic manner. What is at stake here is not political censorship, which I oppose vehemently, but a curator's prerogative in selecting and approving work to be exhibited."

The flags weren't originally part of "Android Madonna"; Billie Grace added them in response to the recent Supreme Court decision on abortion, as commentary on the threat of "government legislating the womb." The three-by-five-foot flags were representative, she said, of "labia" (this was a substantial sculpture). Christine Tamblyn espied Billie Grace hanging up the flags and said to her, "Well, it's all right with me, but Anne's going to have to take the flak for this." (Anne being Anne Meissner, the director of the gallery.) Tamblyn and Meissner



## ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

then retreated behind closed doors for private colloquy. The next day Christine Tamblyn, having done some hard tactical thinking, told Billie Grace Lynn that the fabric of the flag clashed aesthetically with the steel and wire mesh of the Madonna's womb, and that aside from such aesthetic concerns, "there are people on the far right who are just waiting for something like this to happen." Either the flags had to go or "Android Madonna" had to be evicted from the show.

Billie Grace, just out of graduate school and eager to show her work, submitted to aesthetic and political argument, otherwise known as superior firepower. She put up her sign. Tamblyn put up hers. Later someone, probably Meissner, took them both down and began to organize her show on censorship.

This is an instructive story about art, politics and society. Many censors don't want to make a forthright announcement that censoring is what they are up to. So they hide behind words like "complex," just as Christine Tamblyn did when she reproved Billie Jean Lynn for ignoring "complex political issues," meaning the far-from-complex issue of a bunch of right wingers picketing the gallery and poking through its budget in search of evidence of NEA funding. The trick used by a sophisticated censor is to suggest that somehow the censuree lacks subtlety, is being "too obvious" or "crude."

One of my first jobs was to work as an editor and reviewer at the *Times Literary Supplement*. The editor, a nice fellow called Arthur Crook who had worked his way up from copy boy, often altered sentences in which I had derided some right winger for being a mutton-headed Nazi. "The rapier, not the bludgeon, dear boy," he would cry genially as he altered my copy from abuse of the "Nazi mutton-head" variety to "perhaps a little too damagingly extreme in his views."

Another deadly word in the censor's arsenal is "predictable." No one likes being called "predictable." People often ask me if the editors at the *Wall Street Journal*—where I have a column every three weeks on the op-ed page—censor my copy. They never have, though the editor did once ask me to tone down an attack on God. I had called Him "a deity of insensate savagery" and I was prevailed upon to take "insensate" out, though I'm sure He who in his infinite mercy and compassion decreed that a little

boy should have his leg amputated as he looked at his dead parents crushed in their car beneath the Nimitz Freeway will not spare me hellfire in consequence. But when I wrote four or five *Wall Street Journal* columns in a row, some time in 1985 or so, about Reagan and the contras, the editor began to mutter that I was getting "predictable" and why didn't I defend the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

"Crude" is a tremendously useful word in the censoring officer's lexicon. Suppose an editorial writer on a mainstream newspaper here in the U.S. decides that it is worth pointing out that although the efforts of the Chinese government to forbid fax machines in Beijing were widely noted and ridiculed in the Western press, not nearly so much attention—in fact no attention at all, so far as I know—has been paid to the order of the Israeli army, together with the civil administration in the Gaza Strip (that is, the military governor) forbidding every Palestinian inhabitant of the Gaza Strip, though not Jewish settlers, "to apply, to use, or to buy and sell, any kind of facsimile

instrument for any purpose whatsoever."

So suppose, which is very unlikely, that our adventurous editorial writer decides to comment on the Israeli edict and draw comparison with the kindred edict of the masters of Beijing. The chances are that a cautionary ooze of verbiage will soon engulf his commentary as his boss, or his own self-censoring equipment, tells him that the comparison is "crude," "unwarranted," ignores "difficult issues" and is anyway probably wrong in its factual assertions. Soon he realizes that what initially appeared to him as a clear-cut issue of oppressive denial of freedom of speech is in fact, like everything else in Israel or the Occupied Territories, "extremely complex," freighted with "ambiguity," and that he had best keep his mouth shut.

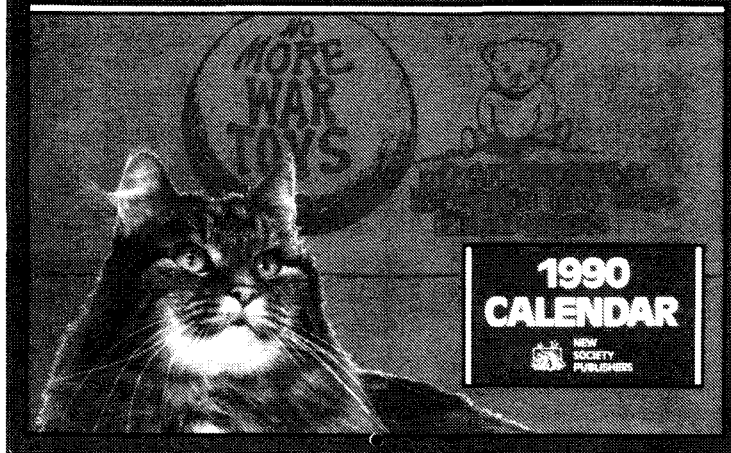
So our slightly less adventurous editorial writer decides to turn his attention to the miners' strike of the Pittston Coal Company in Virginia. He points out that though labor unrest in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe is carefully reported in the U.S. press, almost nothing appeared in the mainstream press about the UMW strike, and particularly about the miners' occupation of Moss No. 3 Preparation Plant when, on September 17, 98 miners seized and occupied a major industrial facility in the first such act in the United States since 1937.

By now our editorial writer is being viewed with suspicion by his boss and colleagues and has become the butt of jokes about "our house radical." He is told that "maybe" he is getting "too close to the subject," has let things get under his skin, is getting "emotional." He duly goes back to writing about trade legislation, which may be complex but not nearly so complex as fax-banning on the West Bank or factory occupations in Virginia.

At least Billie Grace Lynn got to put up her protest sign for awhile. Editorial censorship in the TV producer's office or on the editor's screen passes mostly in silence and is wielded mostly in language so decorous that you could swear that somehow every change was being made in the interests of Free Expression.

Distributed by the *L.A. Weekly*.

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## Pleasures of the long and winding Shaw

**Bernard Shaw, Volume 2:  
The Pursuit of Power**  
By Michael Holroyd  
Random House, 421 pp., \$24.95

By Jeremiah Creedon

**T**HIS SECOND VOLUME IN HOLROYD'S three-part life of Shaw chronicles the years between 1898 and 1918. For Shaw—playwright, Fabian socialist, pamphleteer, committee man and public-hygiene nut—the period

### BIOGRAPHY

coincided with his greatest fame. It was also a transitional time in British history that ended with World War I, a national trauma that Shaw believed Britain's political leaders deserved some blame for causing. His countrymen were outraged by his flippant pragmatism on the issue, and the once wildly popular Shaw suddenly fell from public grace.

Holroyd's richly detailed portrait opens shortly after Shaw's marriage, in his early 40s, to the wealthy Irish-born Charlotte Payne-Townshend. The irony in the match escaped neither Shaw nor his growing audience, who already knew him from



George Bernard Shaw: in fine form—and better content.

his early plays as a witty critic of marriage, and from his membership in the Fabian Society as one of Britain's outspoken socialists. Like other Fabians, he rejected Marx' belief that social reform demanded rev-

olution, arguing instead for peaceful permeation of the existing order. But many thought Shaw's decision to permeate the married life of upper-class leisure pushed the Fabian manifesto a bit too far.

Instead, living in a state of contradiction only seemed to heighten Shaw's already well-developed sense of paradox. Many of his best plays soon followed, including *Man and Superman* (produced in 1905), *Major Barbara* (1905), *Fanny's First Play* (1911) and *Pygmalion* (1914), among others. He often wrote long prefaces to his lighthearted plays

### Living in a state of contradiction only seemed to heighten Shaw's sense of paradox.

that articulated their serious themes. Together these parts form the more complete expression of an artist who was a social critic as well as a famous wit.

An ardent if idiosyncratic feminist, Shaw viewed marriage as mainly an economic institution that was apt to stultify both parties. According to Holroyd, Shaw's predisposition against marriage suggested a general inability to experience love, a condition born in a drab Dublin

childhood and the company of an unaffectionate mother. This character flaw seems to bother Holroyd more than it bothered Shaw, who apparently compensated for this emotional shortcoming by working all the harder on his social and artistic projects. The congenial and generous Shaw was likewise nearly incapable of self-pity.

Holroyd's ambivalence toward Shaw is occasionally problematic. Though by no means hostile, he's not enthralled with his subject either. Holroyd refuses Shaw the mantle of genius or greatness that would have heroicized him—and thus made this long book more compelling in a narrative sense. Holroyd's meticulous research poses another complication. He has chosen not to streamline his findings, a decision that again robs the narrative of a certain ballistic energy.

But neither fault really detracts from what a good biography must do—which is to provide the circumstances of the life in question and some critical insight into the subject's work. By this measure, Holroyd succeeds quite well. His portrait of Shaw becomes all the more authentic for its ungainliness, while revealing the subtle dishonesty of idealization that both impels and weakens so many lesser examples of the same genre.

Jeremiah Creedon is a writer and critic living in Minneapolis.

### The Year's Best Science Fiction: Sixth Annual Collection

Gardner Dozois, editor  
St. Martin's Press  
624 pp., \$13.95

### The Year's Best Fantasy: Second Annual Collection

Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, editors  
St. Martin's Press  
512 pp., \$12.95

### The World Treasury of Science Fiction

David G. Hartwell, editor  
Little, Brown and Co.  
832 pp., \$29.95

By Fred A. Little

**L**IKE REISSUE COMPILATIONS of long-out-of-print jazz sides, science fiction anthologies inevitably draw heavy fire from die-hard fans—criticism too rarely tempered by the fact that it's good to have the material available. Of course, science fiction buffs will disagree, having already seen most pieces in the ill-distributed pulps and marginally professional magazines where they originally appeared.

Given the fact that the volume isn't drawn from a single year, I had (perhaps too) high hopes for David G. Hartwell's *World Treasury of Science Fiction*, in particular for the international perspective the title promises. OK, so I have a touch of

## A fan's notes on a few new frontiers

fan in me. I was disappointed—35 of the 51 authors are from the Anglophone world, and with the exception of a couple of irrelevancies by John Updike and Steve Allen (?),

### FANTASY

there are no surprises here—unless one considers that Harlan Ellison, Clifford Simak, James Tiptree (a.k.a. Alice Sheldon) and Kate Wilhelm don't even rate entries. Excluding crossover giants Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino and Stanislaw Lem (all long available in translation) from the remaining 16, that leaves roughly a dozen less-familiar selections from the rest of the world.

Otherwise, Hartwell's selections and editorial notes are a reasonably fair reflection of science fiction as a historical phenomenon, from the so-called "golden age" of John Campbell's *Astounding* through the "new wave" of the '60s and early '70s. Those unfamiliar with the field will learn the reasons for the literary world's early dismissal of science fiction as serious literature and uncover some of the writers whose work has led to its reappraisal.

That there has been something of a reappraisal is evident from the St. Martin's Press *Year's Best Science Fiction* anthologies, which include works by members of the literature and writing faculties of several major universities. Most of these same writers can be found in Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling's *Year's Best Fantasy*, which also looks beyond the narrow circle of conventional fantasy and horror magazines. In so doing, these collections demonstrate anew what thoughtful readers have long known: the literature of the fantastic, far from being some provincial backwater, is the home of the central mysteries that give life and meaning to the literature of the mundane. Try, for instance, to imagine Joyce's *Ulysses* without the

### As these collections show, the action in science fiction has long since moved from outer to inner space.

Odyssey.

**Crafty reworkings:** From the insidious lyricism of Gene Wolfe and Thomas Disch to the deft humor of Ann Gay, Patricia Wrede and William Kotzwinkle, *Year's Best Fantasy* contains numerous and crafty reworkings of familiar materials. Some stories, like Robert Kelly's "The Book and its Contents" (a magical examination of how language mediates reality), are timeless treatments of questions that just won't go away.

*The Year's Best Science Fiction*, though narrower in scope, has its own virtues. Editor Gardner Dozois, who also edits *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* (IASFM), clearly isn't interested in technowork ejaculatory fantasies in space. But the evidence of the text and the copyright acknowledgements suggest that the book should have been titled *Year's Best SF from the Editor's Employers Plus a Few That Just Couldn't Be Ignored*. Seventeen of the 28 stories originally appeared in products of Davis Publications (IASFM's publishers) or books under St. Martin's Tor imprint. Even allowing for an editor's inevitable certainty within his own taste and sense of quality, that seems a bit extreme.

Dozois' selections tend to be a touch long on atmosphere and a bit short on ideas, a tendency most notable in the stories by Judith Moffet and Lucius Shepherd. Of course, in

a field where payment is by the word—in the high single figures, as often as not, and I don't mean dollars—the ability to puff up a simple idea with elegantly expansive description is almost essential to long-term survival.

As anyone who reads the science and technology sections of the slick newsweeklies knows, the action has long since moved from outer to inner space, and that change is reflected here. Bruce Sterling's "Our Neural Chernobyl," Brian Stableford's "The Growth of the House of Usher" and Eileen Gunn's "Stable Strategies for Middle Management" are all artful and witty examinations of the promises and perils of biotechnology. Kathe Koja's "Distances" manages to fuse the current theme of prosthetic invasion of the self with a more traditional tale of (literally) star-crossed love.

Both of these *Year's Best* collections contain so much first-rate work that there's no need to equivocate. By virtually any measure—the quality of the prose, the conceptualization, the psychological insight or the stories told—either of these books is worth any two of the major publishing houses' "Best of the Year's Short Fiction" compilations covering the literary "mainstream." And that's neither fantasy nor science fiction.

Fred A. Little is a graduate fellow in the writing division of Columbia University.



## Toward a Feminist Theory of the State

By Catharine A. MacKinnon  
Harvard University Press  
330 pp., \$25

By Julia Bogardus

# Mackinnon moves toward a solid state theory of feminism

**W**HAT HAS HAPPENED TO the woman question? In even the best liberal homes, current debates about the politics of sexuality have grown dry as an oat-bran muffin: rape is a problem of violence; prostitution is a distortion of economics; incest signifies psychopathology; and sexual harassment, well, it's an *authority* issue. Regulation of abortion, lest you fear an unclean odor, is merely an invasion of privacy, leading one to believe that unless a woman is raped (a special category of its own, debated apart from regular abortion) her pregnancy bears no relation to the phallus at all. Sex, and, more importantly, a politics informed by sexuality—its determination and construction, its control—has slid off the map in what at least one recently published work calls "the death throes of patriarchy."

Catharine MacKinnon wants to put sexual politics back where it belongs, on the tips of our tongues and at the forefront of our legislatures. As impatient with the timidities of Marxism and feminism as she is with the presumptions of traditional liberalism, MacKinnon is out to engage politics "at the level of epistemology," revealing the permeability of even the most unquestioned aspects of civic life to male power and dominance. In this way, she proposes to pierce the armor of a state that, while purporting neutrality, "is male in the feminist sense: the law sees and treats women the way men see and treat women."

**New terrain coming:** The state is new terrain for MacKinnon, who is most recently known for her authorship (with Andrea Dworkin) of the anti-pornography ordinance passed in Indianapolis in 1983 and overturned by the Supreme Court three years later. And if *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* is her most powerful work to date, it is in no small measure because, as she points out, the state is new terrain for most epistemological challenge.

Americans hold fast to the traditional conception of the liberal state—dispassionate, attitude-free and philosophically larger than any individual's challenge toward its neutrality—even though the struggle to explain exactly how a state can (or would want to) disengage itself from the perspectives of the society that gave it birth may be more difficult still. While we can live with the idea of the law as a conservative force, steering us learnedly through stormy waters, providing ballast against the shifting tides of opinion, we are unwilling to see that its neutrality protects a point of view, or that interest can be vested in its very logic.

To MacKinnon, liberalism's faith in "objectivity" is a dangerous presumption, if only because "objective, according to whom?" is not a question in the state's repertoire. The objective stance resists authorship, denies construction and, in so doing, does precisely what the name im-

## FEMINISM

plies: objectifies social life, removing it from the sphere of mutability, change and causation.

It is, to MacKinnon, much the same process by which men, in pornography, objectify women, making them inert, lifeless, perfect vehicles for the projection of male desire. She insists that behind objectivity has always lurked the male gaze, concealed and protected. The state is just another arena: its "neutrality" assures that men, as citizens and sexual partners equally, get what they want and women get what men want them to.

**Question authority:** Marxism and feminism, after all, take domination seriously as the very dynamic of our social relations, the key to the locked door at the top of the heap. Their deliberate championing of the "outsider" revalues experiences largely unaccounted for by mainstream political theory and poses, to MacKinnon, the essential radical question: "How can what I know be so different from the authoritative version and still be right?" No wonder so many in the contemporary left have

turned to Marxism and feminism for a true politics of power in America.

Yet, as MacKinnon pits Marxists and feminists against each other (a stance, unfortunately, in which they have often been found in recent years), each comes out sounding terribly small, unwilling to look beyond each other's perceived failings. Marxists, irritated with feminism's seeming focus on theory—semiotic, representational, psychoanalytic—dismiss the movement as a bunch of "bourgeois intellectuals" whose interests coincide too neatly with the ruling class. Feminists, aggravated with the Marxist tendency to collapse the particular concerns of gender into the class struggle, insist that they are neither class, caste, or any other subunit of Marxist thought. In the meantime, both groups have failed to approach MacKinnon's questions: what *is* the relationship between the fact that the few have ruled the many and that those few have been men? How can a state be feminist?

Unfortunately, MacKinnon ultimately makes only vague gestures toward answering these questions herself. The feminist state, it appears, is characterized primarily by what it is not: it is not the seat of any monolithic authority, not beyond the reach of critical inquiry; it opposes the *laissez faire* of the liberal state, instead taking positive action against inequality where it exists. The feminist state shuns the "objective" stance, which, it asserts, has

never represented the experience of women.

This last "feminist state is *not*" poses a particular problem for MacKinnon, who proposes a state that celebrates the subjective and brings the old feminist friend, consciousness-raising, back into the fold. If we can (her logic goes) use consciousness-raising to coax out a version of experience, *collective* experience, that is women's own, then we will have posed her essential radical question. No Marxist could object. And yet the problems are obvious: where do women of color fit into this collective? The occasional lesbian s/m couple? And what about our pal Phyllis Schlafly, who heartily endorsed MacKinnon's 1983 ordinance for reasons any feminists would do well to be wary of?

**Sounding board:** If MacKinnon's feminist state sounds a bit vague, she has laid no claim to the science of that state. And insofar as a masculine state—or at least a man-

**Mackinnon argues that the state "is male in the feminist sense: the law sees and treats women the way men see and treat women."**

privileging state—is all we know, she is right to use it as a sounding board for new potentials, however skeletal. Certainly the new focus that even this skeleton of a state brings to issues of the day is provocative, as MacKinnon renders it.

• **Rape law:** now based on the slippery ground of consent (yeah, sure, she wanted it), the law should instead attempt to establish coercion,

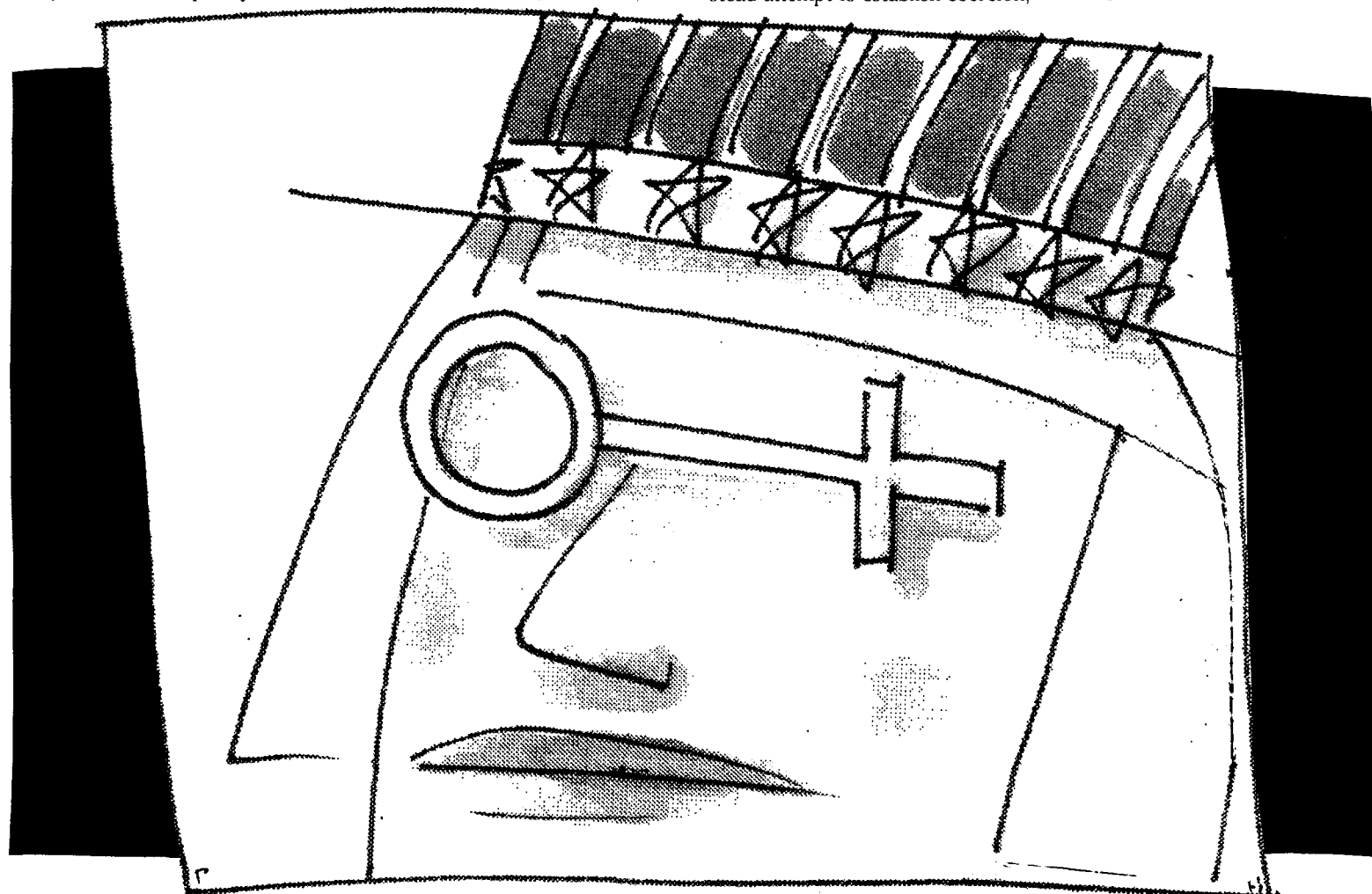
shifting the criminal burden from victim to rapist and distinguishing not a whit between strangers, dates and husbands.

• **Abortion law:** the hermetically sealed realm of "privacy" to which the law currently relegates abortion is to MacKinnon nothing more than a shabby excuse to keep women behind closed doors, isolated from each other and denied the means to call into question the lack of *choice* that characterizes for them either heterosexual intercourse or pregnancy.

• **Pornography legislation:** This has long been MacKinnon's pet issue, and here she is feistier than ever. Those who see pornography in the abstract, as a free-speech issue, are decied as shameless peddlers of "celebratory intellectual obfuscation" and urged to take a closer look at to whom free speech is actually afforded in the newsstands, smut shops and video stores of America. There, no pornography exists for women; rather, it is predicated on their silence.

MacKinnon offers new understanding, if not new answers. Who knows what a feminist state will bring; it has, as she points out, never been tried. What will happen to hierarchy? Will it disappear, leaving nobody at the top of the heap and no one else greedy to be there? And heterosexual sex: so eloquent as a metaphor for oppression and so mistrusted by MacKinnon through the years, can it ever be truly...consensual? She is not out for all the answers; to engage politics at the epistemic level first requires that you reframe the questions. The rigor with which MacKinnon does so is heartening; it is where *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* finds its strength. ■

Julia Bogardus is a writer living in Chicago.









Action for Children's Television, complained that "it's an advertiser's Valhalla.... Participating schools are auctioning off their children to the highest bidder." And Charren's hand-wringing over this Faustian bargain has been echoed by educators, parents and editorial writers in every quarter.

Missing from the ongoing debate is any discussion of the quality of the product itself and, equally important, the public-policy implications of allowing private corporate interests to dictate such an impor-

## Channel One has been unplugged in some states, but protests have escalated the war for hearts and minds and brand loyalties.

tant part of the curriculum as the interpretation of current events. What's most surprising is that so many teachers, and their students, have expressed uncritical support for Channel One and the paid announcements that support it.

During my visit to Gahr High School last spring, I saw ads for Gillette razors, Snickers candy bars and Pert Plus shampoo, as well as a public service plea for a "drug-free America."

Faculty and students stared blankly at the screen or talked among themselves while the commercials were on and never appeared to mention them afterward. Channel One was immediately followed by a 15-minute snack break.

**Fast, fast, fast belief:** As for the program's editorial content, it had more in common with a glitzy music video than a hard-edged newscast. Well-scrubbed and wholesome-looking young anchors raced through stories about the Eastern Airlines strike, an eclipse of the sun, riots in Tibet and political upheavals in Iran, followed by "in-depth" reports on teen immigration from Central America, daily life in the Soviet Union and the American women's movement (silent footage cut to the beat of Aretha Franklin's "Sisters Are Doin' It for Themselves"). Each mini-documentary lasted less than two minutes.

The news elements were short, tightly edited and syncopated whenever possible to a driving rock'n'roll soundtrack, accompanied by flashy graphics and special effects. The half-minute commercials were actually longer than several of the news stories, suggesting a dizzy cross between *Entertainment Tonight* and MTV.

In short, Channel One succeeded in representing what broadcast journalism has in many respects become: long on style and short on substance, with a strong emphasis on celebrities.

The meatiest Channel One report was a visit with a Moscow high-school student, during which the Channel One reporter discovered that members of the teen's family "may have to stand in line or go to three or four different stores to find everything they need."

Contending that individual labor for hire is illegal in the Soviet Union, the reporter paradoxically asserted that "new non-state-run businesses are the cornerstone of Mikhail Gorbachov's plan to rebuild the Soviet economy." A few seconds later, the Channel One correspondent lamented that jeans cost \$200 a pair and that "dishwashers, microwaves and trash compactors are rare."

Then, suddenly, it was Pop Quiz Time: "How many years ago did women in the U.S. get the right to vote?"

The answer, after a shampoo ad and an anti-drug message, is 1920, though Finland was 14 years ahead of us.

There was no time to waste discussing the struggles leading up to this emancipation, since the show had already moved on to an exclusive "music history video" introduced by Olympic track star Florence Griffith-Joyner.

**The pabulum problem:** Obviously, the producers' intention is to make the news as palatable as possible to a segment of the population that traditionally ignores it. In making this information digestible, however, they have extracted nearly all of its nutritional benefits.

"Apparently what we are seeing is the impact of one TV generation educating another," wrote *Los Angeles Times* TV critic Howard Rosenberg after viewing an edition of Channel One.

"[We're seeing] one set of fried minds imposing their own TV-distorted perceptions on a younger set of minds, teachers feeling it is fine for their students to watch news that you can dance to."

None of the three teachers I talked to planned to discuss with their students the presentation of the news or the messages inherent in its commercials.

"There's very little to object to," said Bob, the social-science teacher, after praising a two-minute review of the women's movement as "a very helpful panorama of images."

Earlier, a cross section of juniors and seniors also gave the program a nearly unanimous thumbs-up. The only mild dissent came from a 17-year-old frustrated by the show's rapid-fire pace.

"They have too many news items all at once," she said. "It's so fast that it's hard to catch everything."

"Students are really not as dumb as a lot of adults think we are," added one 16-year-old. "But I think this show will really help a lot of us."

"No one is going to do anything for schools for free," concluded a third. "That's just the way it is today." ■

Richard Mahler covers the TV industry for National Public Radio's *Morning Edition*.

## Marsalis: a touch of crass, a ton of emotion

### Crescent City Christmas Card

Wynton Marsalis  
Columbia

By Dean Robbins

**W**YNTON MARSALIS IS SUCH a drag. Sure, he's a great trumpet player, but he's so busy upholding the "purity" of the jazz tradition that he forgets to have any fun. He doesn't seem to realize that jazz is rooted in the marching bands and honky tonks of his hedonistic hometown, New Orleans. The great jazz artists he admires so much were never too concerned with purity—they were busy channeling all that dancing and laughter and besotted energy into their improvisations.

But on *Crescent City Christmas Card*, the bespectacled conservatory kid finally loosens his tie. For Marsalis, playing seasonal schlock is the equivalent of drinking too much punch at a Christmas party and putting a lampshade on his head. Mate-

rial like "Jingle Bells" and "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" forces him to step off his soapbox and drop his Julliard virtuosity.

Even the play for Christmas dollars is a welcome relief. Dressed in a Santa outfit on the album jacket, Wynton can hardly hold himself up as the defender of "art for art's sake."

## MUSIC

Ironically, putting on the silly Santa suit has made Marsalis a better artist. By allowing a little crassness to seep into his music, he's gotten closer to jazz's earthy essence. And by focusing on Christmas songs, he's discovered a new spiritual intensity. That combination of the sensual and

## Wynton steps off his soapbox and drops his haughty virtuosity.

the sublime—one illuminating the other—is the key to the jazz musician's art.

On "Silent Night," for example, Marsalis has soprano Kathleen Battle warble the lyrics over a wash of bluesy saxophones. When he enters on trumpet—manipulating a plunger mute with unhurried ease—his long, liquid tones hint at an earthy undercurrent in this sacred night. Similarly, "Oh Tannenbaum" gets a perfectly reverent reading except for the plushness of Marsalis' tone, which adds a touch of sexy vulgarity.

The most significant track is "Twas the Night Before Christmas." As Wynton recites this most rhythmic of poems with a jivey instrumental backing, he recalls the sainted Louis Armstrong, who recorded it right before he died in 1971. Marsalis has always acknowledged his debt to Armstrong, but this is the first time he really seems to be paying it off.

Armstrong had a way of uplifting his fans while still showing them a good time, just as Marsalis does here. If Wynton continues in this vein, he'll be that much closer to inheriting King Louis' crown. ■

Dean Robbins is a jazz critic whose work has appeared in the *Village Voice* and other periodicals.



1989 CBS Records, Inc.



## East Germany

Continued from page 8

arithmetic. That may not be a fair charge. After all, it was the German left that argued against applying economic criteria to other immigrants, especially from the Third World. The problem the East Germans pose for the West German left is less of ideology than of identity. With East-West relations in a state of flux, the "German question"—a nation's understanding of itself—has been thrown open to discussion after years on history's dusty back shelves.

For post-war West Germans, the definition of Germany—reunification or acceptance of the two-state status quo—has been crucial in determining if one's politics are right or left. The right has never accepted, at least in public, the country's division after World War II. Leading conservative politicians have regularly paid lip service to "greater German" ambitions, while moving the country ever closer to the West in the form of the European Economic Community and NATO. As long as the Cold War precluded any changes in the status quo, this double-sided game could be played without risk. Now, however, with even Mikhail Gorbachov stating publicly that the Soviet Union accepts German reunification—in principle, at least—the Bonn government of Helmut Kohl must show its true colors.

The left, on the other hand, resolutely opposed reunification from the start. Citing their internationalism, they profess "neither loyalty to the FRG nor to the GDR." Forty-five years after World War II, any type of patriotism or nationalism still has a bad aftertaste. In Germany's divided status they see a guarantee that any aggressive designs emanating from German soil will be nipped in the bud. Underlying this position is the very non-socialist assumption that the German people as a whole are incapable of change. Hence, the left is constantly on guard.

**Identity crisis:** Such watchfulness performs an important restraining function but also inhibits progress. Accepting a permanent two-nation status in Germany would mean imposing a state on the East German people against the will of the majority. Not one refugee I spoke to had a particular feeling of GDR nationality. They feel German in a hazy, abstract way. Peter Lohaus of Berlin's Alternative List (AL) argues that "any reunification of the FRG and GDR in the near future would be in fact an annexation of the East to the West." However, if the GDR undergoes

an evolutionary reform such as in Hungary, it may develop a "social market economy" on its own, making the border between the two states economically and politically obsolete. By calling for permanent recognition of the status quo, the left prevents the very unlikely rise of a new aggressive German giant but at the same time precludes any chance of a unification under a new ethnic attribute that may develop in the future.

Regarding the arriving refugees, the left position sounds like "keep your problems on the other side of the wall." Lohaus even went so far as to call for a quota system of emigration based on the U.S. model. This attitude led film director Freya Klier, who was kicked out of the East last year, to accuse the AL of "apartheid of the worst kind, with the AL playing the part of the Boers." Not all AL members agree with Lohaus, but the damage has been done. Now the right hammers the left, saying: "See! You who always talked about free immigration. Now look at what you are saying."

Lohaus defends his call for quotas by pointing to the hopelessness of the open-border policy. "We can build, build and build more apartments, create new jobs, but they'll keep on coming. Emigration won't solve their problems and will only aggravate ours. The GDR's problems can be solved only in the GDR." Coming from people observing the developments at a safe distance away in the West, people who take for granted the FRG's materialist horn of plenty, this statement sounds like a call for socialist revolution from the executive dining room of General Motors.

Katja Lange-Muller, a prizewinning writer who has been in the West since 1984, hit the nail on the head when she recently wrote: "People always demand heroism from the Germans. Now they are simply coming and saying, 'We don't want to be heroes. We want to drink Coca-Cola and have a piece of the cake before the others eat it up alone.' This is held against them. But actually it's a psychological step forward, parting with the need to be a hero."

"One needn't pretend that this drama is being enacted by mature people steeled in resistance. They are people who were never let out of the sandbox, who have to fight with their infantility, which, by the way, is an important reason for leaving. It is a therapeutic experiment. It is the desire to grow up."

Gordon Lewis is a freelance journalist based in West Berlin.

## Birth control

Continued from page 13

whether the IUD interferes with fertilization or with the implantation of fertilized eggs.

But family-planning experts dismiss the idea that these methods constitute abortion. Kaeser, pointing out that up to half the eggs that have been fertilized are naturally eliminated in a woman's menses, says it is absurd to say that her body is performing abortion.

Nevertheless, some government officials are reluctant to sponsor any research that explores new ways for people to avoid having babies, fearing that new methods may involve abortion. The new drug RU486 embodies these fears. Probably the greatest scientific breakthrough in fertility control in two decades, it faces fierce opposition by anti-abortionists. The drug, which blocks the function of a hormone that would otherwise allow the uterine wall to build up and support a pregnancy, can be used up to five weeks after conception and is considered an abortifacient. Several days after taking RU486 the patient must receive an injection of prostaglandin, which causes the uterus to contract, completing the procedure.

RU486 is safer, easier and less expensive than surgical abortion. But anti-abortionists, charging that RU486 is "chemical warfare on the unborn," have mounted an effective campaign against it. As a result, Roussel-Uclaf, the French company that manufactures it, has banned its sale outside of France—where the French government ordered that it remain available—and China.

If Roussel-Uclaf removed the ban, RU486 could become available in the U.S., but the threat of boycotts by anti-abortionists, whose voice is even more powerful in the U.S. than abroad, would probably discourage American companies from marketing the

drug. In addition, the U.S. government would probably not throw its weight in the same direction as the French government.

Still, American demand for RU486 may prevail. "It's too good; the appetite is too whetted for it," says Dr. Beverly Winikoff of the Population Council, a contraception research and development institution. "It may be slowed by the political climate and by the specific players, but it can't be kept out forever."

And as proponents of legal abortion are being incited to political activity by the anti-abortion movement, many consider the invention of RU486 a hopeful sign. "More people are being up-front about what it is, and saying, 'We need a non-surgical method, damn it,'" says Kaeser.

Ironically, the anti-abortion movement is not only provoking a powerful reaction from those who support legal abortion but may also be triggering renewed political interest in improving contraception. In July, Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) and Rep. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) introduced a bill in Congress that, if passed, could begin to provide the support needed to set the wheels of federal contraceptive development turning again. The bill would establish five national research centers that would operate under the U.S. National Institutes of Health with a combined budget of \$20 million. Three of the centers would be devoted to contraceptive research, the other two to developing treatments for infertility. The bill would also waive student loan debt of up to \$20,000 for each year a PhD works at one of the proposed federal research centers.

The bill's backers say they are building support for it, and they are optimistic about its outcome. The legislation is seen by many as an opportunity to set aside the politically dangerous abortion issue while taking positive action to help prevent unwanted pregnancy. □

## C A L E N D A R

### NEW YORK November 8-14

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK. THE BIRTH OF MACY'S; Elaine Abelson; Wednesday, Nov. 8; 8 p.m.; \$10.  
RUPTURES IN EASTERN EUROPE: Stanley Aronowitz; 4-part class begins Thursday, Nov. 9; 8 p.m.; \$40.  
ECO-FEMINISM; Martha Herbert, Ynestra King, Margo Adler; Thursday, Nov. 9; 8 p.m.; \$5.  
POETS FOR LIFE: A benefit for PEN's fund for writers and editors with AIDS; Saturday, Nov. 11; 8 p.m.; \$7.  
REALPOETIK; Readings by Carl Watson and Sharon Mesmer; Sunday, Nov. 12; 3 p.m.; \$6.  
MARXISM, ECOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY; Joel Kovel, comments by Martha Herbert; Tuesday, Nov. 14; 6 p.m.; \$5.  
THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM: The Challenges for

the U.S. Left; Barbara Ehrenreich and Leo Cawley; Tuesday, Nov. 14; 8 p.m.; \$5.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013, (212) 941-0332.

### LOVELAND, OH December 1-3

"Finding Our Theological Voices." Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Katie Geneva Cannon will explore black and white perspectives on feminist theology, spirituality and ethics. Using a feminist approach that begins with the concrete experiences of women's lives, they will help us deal with our differences not as obstacles but as sources of strength and creativity. Cost: \$100-\$125 includes room and meals. For information or registration, write or call: Grailville Programs, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

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## HELP WANTED

**SEARCH REOPENED.** The NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO, is seeking to fill the vacancy of **HEALTH AND SAFETY SPECIALIST** in its Albany office. The Health and Safety Specialist will assist staff and officers in the design, development and the ongoing monitoring of the union's occupational health and safety program, including training sessions and a workplace health and safety information network. The successful candidate will possess a Masters Degree in Industrial Hygiene or a related field, plus a minimum of three years' related experience. Salary \$28,941-\$40,517 plus transportation allowance and a comprehensive employer-paid benefit package. Send cover letter and resume to: Barbara A. Telasky, Personnel and Office Manager, NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO; 1168-70 Troy-Schenectady Road; P.O. Box 12414; Albany, NY 12212-2414. EOE AA M F H V.

**SEARCH REOPENED.** The NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO, representing over 50,000 professional, scientific and technical employees of the State of New York has reopened its search to fill the position of **REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF FIELD SERVICES** in its Albany office. Applicants must have a background with increasing degrees of supervisory and administrative responsibilities, experience in negotiating and enforcing the collective bargaining agreement through—and including—the arbitration process, and strong oral and written communication skills. Experience in organizing in either the private or public sector will be an asset. Duties would include coordinating, delivering and monitoring PEF resources and programs to PEF members through the direct supervision of professional and administrative staff. Salary low \$40s plus transportation allowance. Comprehensive employer-paid benefits package. Send resume and cover letter to: Barbara A. Telasky, Personnel Department; NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO; 1168-70 Troy-Schenectady Rd; P.O. Box 12414; Albany, NY 12212-2414. EOE AA M F H V.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**RESIDENT CARETAKER.** *The Crossing*, a small, lively conference and hospitality center for social-change activists, seeks 1-2 enthusiastic, committed, part-time caretakers. Begins January 1990. Compensation: room, possibly board. Write: Clark Loveridge, 5023 Cedar Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143. Call: Pam Nelson, (215) 726-6911.

**INTERNS** wanted for progressive arms-control group. Common Security, Non-Offensive Defense, NATO Monitoring. Send resume to BASIC, 1601 Connecticut Ave NW, #302, Washington, DC 20009, or call Peter at (202) 745-2457.

**COMMUNITY JOBS**, socially responsible job opportunities. Subscribe to the only monthly nationwide listing, covering peace & justice, civil rights, unions, consumer advocacy, organizing, social work, and more. \$12 6 issues. **COMMUNITY JOBS**, Box 1029, 1516 P St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

**ACTIVISTS** — Take your canvassing experience one step further...**ORGANIZE!** Work for ACORN, the nation's largest community organization of low-income people on issues such as better housing, rape prevention and stopping bank redlining. Positions in over 20 states. Contact ACORN, 300 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217, (718) 789-5600.

The Human Economic Appalachian Development Co. (HEAD) seeks a **MANAGER** for the Central Appalachian Peoples FCU (CAPFCU), a community development credit union. CAPFCU is a regional cooperative, based in Berea, Kentucky. Experience: exposure to social-change organizations, administration, accounting and commitment to working with low-income people. \$15-17K + benefits. Resumes to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 504, Berea, KY 40403. Questions: Miriam Ellard, (606) 986-8423. Deadline: 12/30/89.

National Trade Union Newspaper seeks two skilled people with labor or related organizational background for the following full-time positions: **GRAPHIC DE-**

**SIGNER.** Responsibilities include paste-up and mechanicals of bimonthly tabloid; some photography; production of leaflets, banners, buttons, etc. **EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE.** Responsibilities include writing, editing, proofreading bimonthly tabloid and other union publications. For both jobs, knowledge of desktop publishing is desirable, and Spanish is a plus. Send resumes to Newspaper, 13 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003.

Partnership for Democracy (formerly The Youth Project) is seeking a **FIELD REPRESENTATIVE** for the mid-Atlantic states. Responsibilities include policy and program planning; economic, political and social analysis; developing knowledge of citizen groups; identifying, evaluating and recommending organizations (as well as providing technical assistance to such organizations); and fund-raising. Experience in organizing and citizen participation work necessary. Familiarity with existing local, statewide and regional social-change projects required. Salary mid 20s; liberal benefits package. Resume, cover letter and three references to: Bob Nicklas, Deputy Director, Partnership for Democracy, 2335 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. Application deadline November 24. EOE. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), the rank-and-file movement for reform in the Teamsters Union, needs **ORGANIZER** for major new democratic opening. Strong commitment to the labor movement a must. Salary low but negotiable. Benefits. Resume to TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, MI 48210, (313) 842-2600.

**EDUCATORS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** in New York City seeks **PART-TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**. 20-25 hours per week, benefits. \$11,000-\$13,000 annually. Call (212) 870-3318.

**WITNESS FOR PEACE**, a faith-based politically independent organization working to change U.S. policy toward Central America seeks a long-term **TEAM COOR-**

**DINATOR** in Managua, Nicaragua. Experience in bicultural living and community living is essential. Must have counseling and administrative experience and be conversationally fluent in Spanish. Application deadline Feb. 1, 1990. Send resume to Phyllis Taylor, 609 E. Allens Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119, (215) 248-3178.

**WITNESS FOR PEACE** seeks an **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** in Durham, N.C., to oversee staff, programs, finances and general operation of Witness for Peace. Experience in administration and Latin America is essential. Fluency in Spanish is preferred. \$18,000 yr., negotiable. Please send resume to Kathy McNeely, 30 North St., Williamstown, MA 01267, (413) 597-2483. Application deadline March 1, 1990.

**UNION ORGANIZERS.** Progressive labor union needs experienced organizers, various locations nationwide, with long-term commitment to labor. Good pay, full benefits. Send work history, personal profile, references to **ORGANIZE**, P.O. Box 34234, Washington, DC 20043-4234. Spanish language skills desirable. Relocation may be required; specify whether geographical restrictions apply. Must have car.

## PUBLICATIONS

**GAY COMMUNITY NEWS**, Since 1973, the only national newsweekly covering lesbian and gay life and liberation. Each week GCN brings you the liveliest mix of news, analysis and entertainment around, as well as a monthly Book Review Supplement and special issues on topics ranging from new gay male performers to lesbian safer sex. 1 year, \$33; 6 months, \$20. GCN Subscriptions, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

**THE COMPREHENSIVE DIRECTORY OF LABOR EDUCATION** now available to ITT readers. Send \$5 check m.o. to Local 189, Workers Education, c/o Jim Bollen, 44 Hollingsworth St., Lynn, MA 01902.

**PROOF JESUS FICTIONAL** — Abelard, Box 5652-J, Kent, WA 98064 (Details: SASE).

Vietnam — told by anti-war GIs. **DAYS OF DECISION**: an oral history of conscientious objectors in the military during the Vietnam War. By Gerald Gioglio. Broken Rifle Press, Box 749-I, Trenton, NJ 08607. \$16.45. "Major Antiwar Literature" — BOOKLIST.

**JEWISH CURRENTS**, November 1989 issue. "Dinkins and Jewish Primary Vote," editorial; "You Mean There Was No Sex in Auschwitz?" story by Vera Schwarz; American Jewish fiction reviewed by Roger B. Goodman; Jewish children's books reviewed by Jane Schofer. Single issue: \$1.50 plus 75c postage. Subscription: \$15 yearly (USA). **JEWISH CURRENTS**, Dept. T, Suite 601, 22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003.

## CALENDARS

**CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB**, 1990 wall calendar, \$7.95 ppd. Nebraskans for Peace, 129 N. Tenth St. #426B, Lincoln, NE 68508, (402) 475-4620.

## PERSONALS

**CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER** links left singles, nationwide. Free sample. P.O. Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

**NATIONWIDE SINGLES PHOTO MAGAZINE.** Send: name, address, age. Send no money. Exchange, 1817 Welton, #1580-BA, Denver, CO 80202.

**BLACK WRITER-POET** in dire need of communication correspondence. Clarence Jones, 87A7347, Shawangunk Correctional Facility, Box 700, Wallkill, NY 12589.

**CHALLENGE**...an ex-conservative, current inmate (tax evasion) is interested in hearing from ladies to convert him (at 42) to a more sensible way of thinking...and living. Write Tom Huyer, 01735-025, P.O. Box 1000, Sandstone, MN 55072.

**THE DEPLEASANT MEN** in urgent need of correspondence. Please write: Larry McLaurin, Camp #7 67427, or Billy Joe Hankins, Camp #7 61083, Parchman, MS 38738.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HOUSE TO SHARE.** Single mom seeking female housemate to share quiet, roomy house in Logan Square (Chicago). Large room, laundry facilities. Nice yard. Nonsmoker. \$300 + 13 utilities. (312) 489-4908.

## ASSOCIATIONS

**BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY.** Information: ITT, RD1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036.

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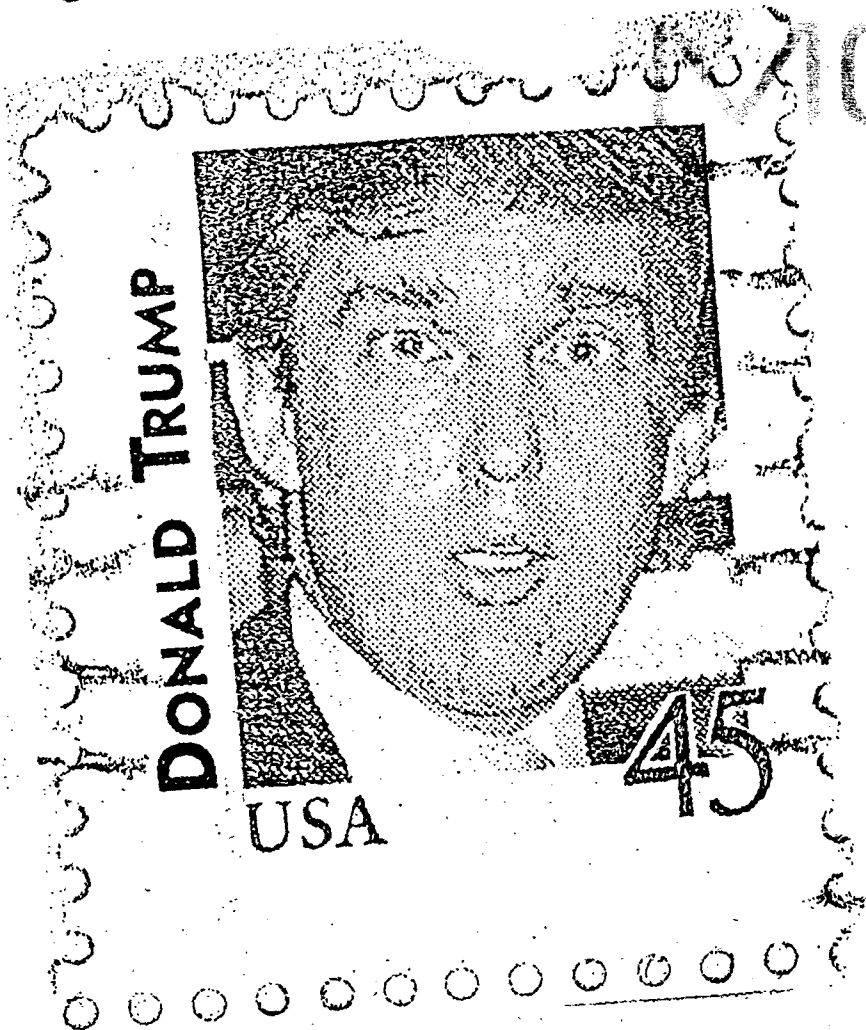
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# POSTAGE



Dear Postmaster General Frank,

I noted with interest your recent decision to team the U.S. Postal Service up with MCA Home Video to promote MCA's video release of the animated dinosaur film *The Land Before Time*. The designs for the dinosaur stamps look great! I especially like the running stegosaurus and your idea of selling a postal-service dinosaur T-shirt for only \$6.95. (I just hope you deliver it faster than you do letters these days!) And you couldn't have picked a cuter film to promote. My 10-year-old daughter liked it a lot, though I must admit that its nuclear-winter subtext took me aback. But I guess that's just me.

Anyway, I commend your foresight! It's about time the post office stopped simply delivering ads and started making them! I recently read that you want the postal service to be more aggressive marketing in the area of high-profit stamp collecting. Well, this is where I can really be of help. As something of an expert in the field of philatelic tie-ins—after all, I was an avid stamp collector in my youth—I can only second your desire to market the U.S. Postal Service a little more seriously, and I'd like to make a serious connection with you (maybe, roughly speaking, along HUD lines) to do exactly that!

To begin with, I gather MCA approached you for the present tie-in campaign. Well, don't be so passive! You should approach the major corporations with your marketing ideas. For instance, why not contact the Campbell Soup Company? It's a perfect match. They're always putting out new soups, and you're

always putting out new stamps. Only the other day I noticed they were introducing Homestyle Bean Soup. So why not do a 60-stamp set geared to their next soup launch? Naturally, the look should be Warhol-esque. Imagine the T-shirt possibilities in that one. ("Collect them all! 60 cans, 60 stamps, 60 T-shirts!") We're talking multimillions here! Or you could extend the concept of the commemorative stamp and let various corporate CEOs and celebrities commemorate themselves! ("Trump! The Stamp!")

But that's not half of it. Don't just think "selling product." Think "selling the corporate image" (à la PBS). Your institution is ideally suited for this sort of image-repair work. For instance, you could get Union Carbide to underwrite a tasteful six-stamp series on ancient India (sights of Moghul Bhopal, etc.), or McDonald's to sponsor a Before-the-Hamburger Rainforest nostalgia set with lots of butterflies and bugs set against lush backgrounds, like those stamps Portugal used to issue for its African colonies in the good old days. And wouldn't Exxon jump aboard if you offered them an Exxon Ecology of the Seas commemorative series?

Let's face it, Postmaster Frank, we're in a new ad world. If you just open your mind to them, new marketing and tie-in possibilities will appear almost magically! But first you've got to stop thinking of the postal service as mainly a stamp window. Take that dinosaur T-shirt. I didn't want to say it at the beginning, but let's be honest. Do you really want the U.S. Postal Service linked with dinosaurs in the public mind? I know, I know. Modern paleontological studies have changed our image of the creatures. But not that much. To most people, dinosaurs are still lumbering, overweight dolts. So leave the dinosaur T-shirts to the natural history museums and take stock of the clothing resources readily available to you!

Take the mail bag. You have a potential marketing gem there, and you don't even seem to know it! ("Genuine U.S. Postal Service Delivery Pouch. Twice the volume of any competing bookbag or backpack! All-weather, tested canvas material! Cowhide leather strap! Ten-year warranty. \$99.95.") After all, if they could turn the Danish Bookbag, an untested item from a little-known country, into a national craze, how could you miss with such a proven winner?

Once you start thinking this way, you won't be able to stop. The mail hat ("100 years of protective service"), the all-weather postal poncho. It's endless. My advice is to take the mail-order route, initially. Produce a snazzy catalogue. Call it "Sun, Rain and Snow: Styles of the U.S. Postal Service." As soon as product begins to move, offer your corporate-stamp sponsors apparel-logo rights (for a price, of course). What shoe company, for instance, wouldn't want their name on Postal Express sneakers?

The corporate cross-fertilization potential is limitless. I don't think it's far-fetched to imagine that a few years down the line, Postmaster General Frank, you'll be able to subcontract out your mail delivery responsibilities and concentrate on managing your real profit centers—Rain 'n' Shine Postal Boutiques on malls across America!

Well, when it comes to money-making ideas, let me assure you, this is just the tip of the iceberg. I suggest we meet in the coming weeks to iron out a mutually satisfactory consultation agreement. After all, when the ideas are flowing, there's no time like the present to get started!

Sincerely,

*Tom Engelhardt*

Tom Engelhardt  
Philatelic Licensing Consultant